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THE SECOND PART OF THE FOUNDATION OF Moral Goodneſs;

Illuſtrating and Enforcing the

Principles and *Reaſonings*

Contained in the Former.

Being an ANSWER to certain REMARKS communicated by a Gentleman to the Author.

By John Balguy.

Virtus eſt altiſſimis defixa radicibus. ——
CICERO.

The SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed for JOHN PEMBERTON at the *Buck* over-againſt St. *Dunſtan*'s Church in *Fleetſtreet*.

MDCCXXXIII.

Price One Shilling and Six-pence.

SIR,

I Have carefully conſidered the Remarks which you did me the Honour to write on my little Book; and without much Prefacing, ſhall endeavour to give as clear and diſtinct an Anſwer as I can, to the ſeveral Arguments and Objections therein contained. I deſire I may be excuſed if I ſometimes tranſgreſs in point of Brevity. Where-ever I meet with an Opportunity of illuſtrating and enforcing the Proofs made uſe of in my former Papers, I ſhall take the Liberty of enlarging a little with that View, that I may anſwer, as far as I am able, both Intentions at the ſame time. As I think it the faireſt way, ſo I preſume it will be moſt agreeable to the Reader, to ſet down at length every Article of your Obſervations, and to ſubjoin my Anſwers as I go along. But before I begin, I judge it incumbent on me to inform the Reader, that theſe your Remarks were drawn up with a private Deſign; and without any Thought, at that time, of having them made publick.

ARTICLE I. You define *Reaſon* to be *a Faculty enabling us to perceive, either immediately, or mediately, the Agreement, or Diſagreement of Ideas, whether Natural or Moral.* This Agreement, or Diſagreement, you do not ſuppoſe to be any Likeneſs or Unlikeneſs in the Ideas, but only ſuch a Conformity as makes them concur towards the forming of ſome Propoſition or Concluſion. Thus by the Agreement of the Ideas of the Numbers 2, 3, with that of 5, it follows that 2 and 3 are equal to 5; not for any Likeneſs, or Reſemblance that there may be in thoſe Ideas, but that in the Eſſence of thoſe Ideas that Truth is neceſſarily included. I have no Objection to the Definition, taken in this Senſe.

ANSWER. By that *Agreement of Ideas* which I make to be the Object of *Reaſon* or *Intelligence*, I do not mean any particular Agreement, but any, or every Kind of Agreement that we are capable of diſcovering in our Ideas. As Ideas themſelves are of various Kinds, ſo the Relations interceding between

tween them are conformably different. *The Agreement of Arithmetical Ideas* is, I ſuppoſe, either that of *Equality*, or that of *Proportion*; and their Diſagreement either that of Inequality, or Diſproportion. Between the Numbers 2, 3, and that of 5, the Relation or Agreement is that of *Equality*. Between the Numbers 1 and 4, and 4 and 16, the Relation or Agreement is that of *Proportion*. And ſuch Relations neceſſarily and eternally belong to ſuch Ideas, whether any Propoſitions or Concluſions be formed about them or not.

ART. II. But then it muſt be obſerved, that the Agreement which we find between Gratitude and Bounty, and the Diſagreement of Ingratitude with Kindneſs received, are Expreſſions, which, if uſed with any Truth, muſt be taken in a quite different Meaning from that wherein they are to be underſtood in the Definition above.

ANS. Since *Moral Ideas* are very different from all others, eſpecially *Arithmetical* ones, no wonder if they exhibit different *Relations*. Between the Ideas of *Bounty* and *Gratitude* there is a manifeſt Congruity, which is commonly called *Moral Fitneſs*. Whatever Terms or *Expreſſions* may be uſed about them, the Ideas themſelves correſpond, and,

as

as it were, tally to each other with great Exactneſs. No Diſpoſition of Mind can poſſibly be thought of, ſo ſuitable to the Caſe and Circumſtance of a Perſon obliged, as that of Gratitude, or any Actions ſo juſt and proper, and fit, as thoſe which flow from thence. The Ideas of *Bounty* and *Gratitude* are ſo cloſely connected, and the Agreement between them is ſo viſible and clear, that no Man can overlook it, or be inſenſible of it. The moſt ignorant underſtand it, as the moſt vicious are forced to acknowledge it. —— What is it then that knits theſe Ideas together, and eſtabliſhes the Conformity between them? Is the Agreement arbitrary, or dependent on the Will of any Agent? No, not even the Creator's. It ſprings from the ſame *Neceſſity of Nature* that makes the Three Angles of a Triangle equal to Two Right ones; or that fixes a certain Proportion between a Cone, and a Cylinder of the ſame Baſe and Height. Can then ſuch an *Equality* or *Proportion* be aſcribed to thoſe Moral Ideas, as belongs to theſe Mathematical ones? Thoſe Terms are uſed and applied to both Kinds, but not preciſely in the ſame Senſe. They belong originally to Ideas of Quantity; and when they are uſed to denote *Moral Fitneſs*, their Signification is ſomewhat figurative. But concerning the Meaning, or Propriety of Terms, I have no Diſpute at preſent. However the Agreement between Moral Ideas may be denominated or diſtinguiſhed, what I contend

for

for is, that the Ideas themſelves invariably bear ſuch Relations to each other; which are no leſs certain, and oftentimes more immediately evident than the Equality or Proportion between the forementioned Angles and Figures.

ART. III. The Ideas of Bounty and Gratitude are, if you pleaſe, Moral Ideas; but no Moral Propoſition can rightly be deduced from them: Or however, no ſuch Propoſition as includes any ſort of Obligation. From the mere Idea of Gratitude, it will no more follow that Men ought to be grateful, than from the Idea of Ingratitude, that they ought to be ungrateful, if we ſuppoſe no Sentiment.

ANS. If *Moral Ideas* had no *Relations* belonging to them, or if theſe Relations were imperceptible to Human Underſtandings; then it might juſtly be ſaid, that our *Moral Ideas* yielded us no *Propoſitions*. But ſince ſome of theſe Ideas agree, and others differ, as much at leaſt as any other Ideas; and ſince theſe Agreements and Differences are commonly very evident to all who will attend, it follows, that Moral Ideas muſt needs be equally fruitful of Propoſitions.—— The Idea

of

of Gratitude cannot properly be ſaid to infer any Obligation. But when a Man compares the Idea of Gratitude with that of a Benefaction received, and examines the Relation between them, he cannot avoid inferring, or concluding that he ought to be grateful. This will be farther conſidered under the three following Articles.

ART. IV. If we had otherwiſe no Idea of Obligation, the Ideas of Gratitude, Ingratitude, and Bounty, could never ſo much as afford us a general Idea of Obligation it ſelf; or inform us what is meant by that Term; much leſs could we be able to deduce the particular Obligation to Gratitude from theſe Ideas.

ANS. If receiving of Benefits be a *good Reaſon*, as it certainly is, why the Receiver ſhould be *grateful*, then it *obliges* him ſo to be. I obſerved in my former * Papers, that the Perception of ſuch a Reaſon perpetually binds all Rational Agents, and is indeed the firſt and higheſt of all Moral Obligations. The Dictates and Directions of Right Reaſon are the very Rule which the Deity Himſelf inviolably obſerves, and which therefore muſt needs affect all intelligent Creatures. —— The

* Ibid. Page 31.

Ideas

Ideas of *Benefits* and *Obligations* are ſo cloſely connected, that to *do a Man a Kindneſs*, and to *oblige him*, are uſed promiſcuouſly, as Expreſſions of the ſame Signification.—— Every Man who receives a Benefit, receives along with it a Reaſon for Gratitude: And that Reaſon he muſt perceive, if he be not quite thoughtleſs. What *Inſtinct* prompts him to, his *Underſtanding* will immediately ſecond and confirm. His Reaſon will readily ſuggeſt to him what Behaviour is due to his Benefactor, and inform him that no Actions but *grateful* ones, can be in any degree *ſuitable* or *fit*. To be *injuriouſly*, or even *indifferently* affected towards him, will appear as abſurd, as incongruous, as contrary to the Nature of Things, as it would be for a Husbandman, after a full Crop, to cover his Ground with Flints inſtead of Manure. No Affections, no Actions, and by Conſequence, no Ideas, can poſſibly be more unſuitable, or miſmatched, than Kindneſs and Ingratitude.—— Moral Actions, like other Things, agree or diſagree, eſſentially and unalterably. Hence flow thoſe Relations and Reaſons whereon Morality is founded, and which derive Obligations upon all Agents capable of perceiving them.

ART. V. If you will affirm, that by comparing theſe Ideas in your Mind, you can perceive any ſuch Moral Propoſition neceſſarily included, *viz.* that a

Man ought to be grateful; I ask, Whether you ſee that neceſſary Conſequence immediately upon comparing theſe Ideas, or mediately by the Help of ſome intermediate Reaſoning or Proof? If you ſee ſuch a Connection immediately, or as it were intuitively, I wonder every Body elſe cannot ſee it. If you have any intermediate Reaſonings or Proofs, pray let us have them.

Ans. That a Man ought to be grateful to his Benefactors, may be looked upon as equivalent to a ſelf-evident Propoſition. If it need any Proofs, they are ſo obvious and clear, that the Mind perceives them in an Inſtant, and immediately allows the Truth of the Propoſition. Between *Bounty* and *Gratitude* there is a plain Congruity of *Moral Fitneſs*; and between *Bounty* and *Ingratitude* a plain Incongruity or *Unfitneſs*.—— Therefore Gratitude is *reaſonable*, and Ingratitude *unreaſonable*.——Therefore the one ought to be *obſerved*, and the other *deteſted*. As theſe Concluſions appear to me inconteſtable, ſo I preſume the Principle from whence they flow is ſtrictly ſelf-evident. Ingratitude is not only ſhocking to Natural Affection, but neceſſarily appears to the Underſtanding irregular, diſproportioned, monſtrous.—— But if this Principle, and the Connection of thoſe Concluſions

cluſions with it, be ſo plain and evident, how happens it that they are ever called in queſtion? I anſwer, That Mens Underſtandings, like their Eyes, may poſſibly be ſometimes dazled with too much Light. Doubts and Scruples have been raiſed, one time or other, concerning the plaineſt and moſt evident Truths in the World, even by Philoſophers and Men of Letters. But as to the Points before us, I may appeal to the general Judgment of Mankind.— Let any illiterate Man be asked theſe plain Queſtions: Is not Ingratitude to a Benefactor very unfitting? —— Is it not therefore very unreaſonable? —— Ought it not therefore to be abhorred and avoided by every body? to each of theſe Queſtions, he will, I doubt not, without any Heſitation anſwer in the Affirmative. Should he be further asked, Whether he really *underſtood* theſe Truths? he would not only make the ſame Anſwer, but be ſurprized at the Queſtion.

ART. VI. I know not well what you mean by this Expreſſion, *viz. That our Underſtandings are capable of Moral Perceptions.* I believe every body agrees that in ſome Senſe they are; that is, that the Mind is capable of receiving or forming Moral Ideas: But it will not follow from hence, that Obligation is deduci-

ble merely from our Moral Ideas, without ſuppoſing any Sentiment.

Ans. In ſaying that *our Underſtandings are capable of Moral Perceptions*, I mean, that they are not only capable of forming Ideas of *Agents* and *Actions*, but of perceiving likewiſe the *Relations* of Agreement and Diſagreement between them. From theſe Relations, *Obligation* is plainly deducible in the Manner before mentioned. But I ſhall here lay it down more particularly. —— I have already obſerved, that between ſuch and ſuch *Agents*, *Actions*, and *Objects*, naturally and neceſſarily intercede certain Relations of *Agreement* or *Diſagreement*, *Fitneſs* or *Unfitneſs:* Conformably whereto, the ſame Relations are obſervable between their reſpective *Ideas*; which, when juſt, always correſpond to *Things* themſelves. For the Reality of theſe Relations, every Man muſt be referred to his own Perceptions, ſince they admit of no other Proof. Such *Fitneſſes* and *Unfitneſſes* are as manifeſt to our Underſtandings, as it is viſible to our Eyes that *Blue* is not *Green*, or *Scarlet Yellow*; or to our Imaginations, that a *Triangle* is not a *Circle*, or a *Cone* a *Cube*.

The next Point to be conſidered, is, whether Actions thus *fit*, be not therefore *reaſonable*, and Actions unfit, therefore unreaſonable. If this *Moral Fitneſs* of certain Actions be not a Reaſon for the doing of them, I ſee not how any Thing can be a Reaſon for any Thing.

Moral

Moral Fitneſs is Conformity to Order and Truth; and if our Reaſon did not approve of this, we ſhould have Cauſe to conclude it an irregular, diſorderly Faculty. But it is certain that our Reaſon does approve of it, and that neceſſarily. The intrinſick Goodneſs of ſuch Actions is an irreſiſtible Recommendation to our Minds and Judgments, and by Conſequence, is a perpetual Reaſon for the Concurrence of our Wills. Thoſe Actions therefore which our Reaſon approves as ſelf-worthy, and which are choſen and done with that View, and upon that Account, muſt not only be *reaſonable*, in the ſtricteſt Senſe of the Word, but in the higheſt Degree that our Actions are capable of. However, we muſt either allow thoſe Actions to be *reaſonable*, for the doing of which a good Reaſon may be given, and which our Faculty of Reaſon approves of; or it will follow, that none of our Actions are or can be reaſonable.

What remains, is to deduce from hence the *Obligation* that we are now enquiring after. How does it appear that we *ought* to do what is *reaſonable*? As Moral Agents, we are either obliged to this, or nothing. But what is it we mean by *Obligation*? Certainly not *Compulſion*. Since *Obligation* ſuppoſes *Liberty* it muſt be ſomething conſiſtent with Libery. It ſuppoſes likewiſe ſome *Perception* in the Mind, ſince no Agent can be obliged to or by any thing while he is ignorant of it. What is it then, which as ſoon as perceived,

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produces that State of Mind which we call *Obligation?* It muſt be ſome *Motive*, ſome *Inducement*, ſome *Reaſon*, that is fit to influence and incline the Will, and prevail with it to chuſe and act accordingly. —— Is not then *Intereſt* or *Pleaſure* ſuch an Inducement? It is in reſpect of *Senſible Agents*, conſidered as ſuch. And thus it is that Men, as *Senſible Agents*, are *obliged* to purſue *Pleaſure* or *Natural Good*; which as ſoon as they have experienced, they naturally and neceſſarily approve: But conſidered as *Moral Agents*, they have no Concern with *Natural Good.* I took notice in my former Papers, that *Moral Good* is the only Object of *Moral Affection*, and the only Aim or End of *Moral Agents*, who are influenced and attracted by it, as *Senſible Agents* are by *Natural Good.* As the latter therefore are *obliged* to purſue their End, which I call *Intereſt* or *Pleaſure*; ſo the former are *obliged* to purſue theirs, which is *Moral Rectitude*, *Reaſon*, or *Virtue.* —— I intend not by this to ſet Natural and Moral Obligations on a Level, but to ſhew the Nature and Grounds of Obligation in general. In what Reſpects they differ, and how far the one are ſuperior to the other, are Points not to be now diſcuſſed without too long a Digreſſion.

I proceed therefore to obſerve, That the Obligation which ariſes from *Authority*, may be looked upon as compounded of the other two. *Laws* affect us in one Capacity, and *Sanctions* in another. As *Senſible Agnts* we

are

are obliged to aim at Rewards, and avoid Puniſhments: As *Moral Agents* we may be doubly obliged. It is morally fit and juſt to pay Obedience to a rightful Legiſlator, in all Caſes not over-ruled by ſome higher Authority; and if, moreover, his Laws be in themſelves *morally good*, our Obligations riſe in Proportion.

It appears, I think, from what has been ſaid, that *Moral Obligations* are ſtrictly connected with *Moral Fitneſs*, and the *Reaſons* of Things. To reſolve all Obligations into *Intereſt* or *Natural Good*, ſeems to me confounding *Morality* with *Senſibility*. It is in effect to ſay that *Virtue* is not *good in it ſelf*, nor any otherwiſe good, than as it *does us good*. Whereas it is certainly *ſelf-amiable*, and *ſelf-worthy*; and as ſuch, muſt be exceedingly fit to operate on the *Wills* of Moral Agents, as it never fails to engage their *Judgments*. And indeed whatever appears worthy of *Approbation* and *Eſteem*, as Virtue does in the higheſt degree, muſt needs appear worthy of *Choice*: And what appears worthy of Choice, *ought* to be choſen; or in other Words, Men are *obliged* to chuſe it. In ſhort, whatever Agent is ſaid to be under an *Obligation* to the Performance of any Action, the true Meaning of ſuch an Expreſſion, as it appears to me, is, that he perceives ſome *good Reaſon*, either *internal* or *external*, Moral or Natural, for the Performance of it. What falls ſhort of this

this, can be no Obligation; and what goes beyond it, muſt be Coaction.

I might proceed to ſhew by various Conſiderations, that *Reaſon* is and muſt needs be, the firſt and moſt eſſential *Law* of our Nature; that Homage and Obedience are indiſpenſibly due to it, on account of its abſolute Worth, and uncreated Excellence; that it preſents it ſelf to our Minds not only as a *Law*, but as a kind of *Legiſlator*, rewarding our good Actions with pleaſing Reflections, and puniſhing our bad ones with painful After-thoughts, and the Stings of Remorſe. I might further obſerve, that the Breach of any Moral Obligation is not only recollected with Regret, but diſturbs and embitters our natural Enjoyments; Whereas the Remembrance of rejected Pleaſure is ſeldom diſquieting, and ſometimes highly ſatisfactory. But as theſe Topicks would carry me too far out of my way, ſo the inſiſting on them might be looked upon not as *anſwering*, but *preaching*.

ART. VII. I cannot deny that there is an Agreement between Bounty and Gratitude, and a Diſagreement between Bounty and Ingratitude; but this only relatively to our Sentiment. Gratitude is agreeable to our Sentiment, and Ingratitude the contrary. I cannot conceive

conceive any other Agreement or Diſagreement between them.

Ans. If there be not a *real* and *objective* Agreement between the Ideas of *Bounty* and *Gratitude*, how ſhall we be able to diſcover or determine that there is any ſuch thing as *real*, *abſolute Truth?* Why may not all Ideal Agreements be looked upon as *relative* to ſome *internal Senſe?* The Agreement between *twice Three, and Six*, does not appear to me plainer or more evident, than that between *Bounty* and *Gratitude*. From whence I am forced to conclude, that either both are *real*, or both *relative*. Upon the former Suppoſition, I ſee no occaſion for any *Sentiment* or *internal Senſe*, ſince our *Underſtandings* are ſufficient for the Perception of *real Agreements*. Upon the latter Suppoſition our *Underſtandings* are quite uſeleſs. —— For any thing that appears to the contrary, we perceive the Agreements of *Moral Ideas* in the ſame way, and by the ſame Faculty that we do thoſe of *Numbers*; and why we ſhould aſcribe the Perception of the one to the *Underſtanding*, and the Perception of the other to an *internal Senſe*, I am not able to comprehend.

Art. VIII. *To give Pain*, you ſay, *without Cauſe, to a Senſible Creature, is an Action ſelf-evidently wrong, as being*

 directly

directly repugnant to the Nature of the Object, and the Circumſtances of the Agent. If you allow the Agent to have an internal Sentiment diſpoſing him to the Good of Senſible Creatures, giving Pain will certainly be repugnant to the Circumſtances of the Agent: But allowing no ſuch Sentiment, however Pain may be repugnant to the Nature of the Object, I do not think it appears ſelf-evidently, or by any Deduction in the World, that ſuch an Action is wrong.

Ans. I allow the Agent to have *Natural Affection*, or a Principle of Humanity; which I preſume is what is here meant by an *internal Sentiment.* But I laid no Streſs upon it, nor had any Regard to it in that Aſſertion. By the *Circumſtances of the Agent*, I meant only his being a Rational, or Moral Agent, and his having no Cauſe or Reaſon to give Pain, For ſuch an Agent *to give Pain to a Senſible Creature* muſt be *wrong*, if it be *morally unfit.* And that it is morally unfit, ſeems to me as plain and evident as any Propoſition can be. It is as contrary to *Nature*, and to the *Truth of Things*, as to give a thirſty Man *Poiſon* inſtead of *Drink.* It is contrary to the Nature of the *Object*, becauſe he naturally,

turally deſires Indolence and Pleaſure, and ſhuns Pain. It is contrary to the Nature and Circumſtances of the *Agent*, becauſe he being Rational, muſt act unnaturally whenever he acts unreaſonably. And he muſt act unreaſonably, when he acts both without and contrary to Reaſon. Now he is ſuppoſed to have no Reaſon for giving Pain, and yet muſt ſee a good Reaſon for not giving it. For where there is no Reaſon for Pain, there is always a good Reaſon againſt it, ariſing from the Nature of the Thing it ſelf. If it be repugnant to the Nature of a Rational Agent to act without Reaſon, as it certainly is, how much more repugnant muſt it be to counteract it, and produce an Effect ſo much worſe than nothing? ——— Suppoſing then the Agent to know what *Pain* is, and likewiſe that the Object is a *Senſible* Creature, and himſelf a *Rational* one; he muſt needs perceive an immediate and glaring Diſagreement between ſuch an *Action* coming from him, and ſuch an *Object*. If this Propoſition be not ſtrictly ſelf-evident, yet it is eaſily reſolved into ſuch as are ſo; nothing being capable of a plainer or more familiar Demonſtration. —— Whatever is contrary to the Nature or Truth of Things, is *wrong*. ——— Such an Action is contrary, *&c.* —— The latter of theſe Propoſitions has been juſt now proved. The former is ſtrictly ſelf-evident. Whoever allows all *Contradictions* to Truth to be *falſe*, muſt allow all *Counteractions* to Truth to be *wrong*.

Theſe two Propoſitions being exactly parallel, muſt either be both ſelf-evident or neither.

ART. IX. An Action can be right or wrong no otherwiſe, than as it ſerves more or leſs, or not at all, to the End propoſed by it; or as it is a Conſequence of ſome Error in the Mind.

ANS. Thoſe Actions muſt be *wrong*, which are Deviations from *Order* and *Truth*. To give Pain without Cauſe to an innocent Perſon, is an Action highly *irregular* and *diſorderly*; becauſe there is a viſible and odious Diſagreement between *Action*, *Agent*, and *Object*. And upon the ſame Account it is counteracting the *Truth* of Things. To give cauſeleſs Pain to an innocent Perſon, is to treat him, I will not ſay as a *Malefactor*, but as ſomething worſe. In reſpect of a Malefactor, there is *a Cauſe*, *a Reaſon* for the Infliction of Pain. But in the Caſe before us, there is neither that Reaſon; nor, by the Suppoſition, any other. It is therefore acting, as the Agent would and ought to act, ſuppoſing *Innocence* deſerved to be *puniſhed*, and that he had a Right to puniſh it. Is not this then a notorious Miſapplication of Pain? Is not the Action viſibly abſurd and inconſiſtent?——— Whatever *End* an Agent may propoſe to himſelf, if he act contrary to all *Rules*, ſuch an

Action

Action muſt be * *wrong*. But in ſuch Actions as that I am conſidering, the very *End* it ſelf muſt be *Wrong*. The gratifying of a cruel Diſpoſition is an immoral View, a criminal Deſign. Not to mention the Unreaſonableneſs of it, it implies greater Corruption of Heart, and Pravity of Affection, than any Man can arrive at without his own very great Fault: Even *natural Inſtinct* muſt have been violated, as well as *Reaſon* and *Truth*. —— It does not follow that an Action is *morally wrong*, becauſe it is occaſioned by *ſome Error in the Mind*. Suppoſe for Inſtance, that Alms or Bounties are miſapplied through Miſinformation, or Miſtake, the Actions notwithſtanding may be morally Good. In this Caſe the Goodneſs of them is founded on the Agreement between the *Agent*, and the *ſuppoſed Objects*. Where *real Rectitude* is not to be had, *Ideal* takes place, and becomes the ſole Rule. According to the old Diſtinction, ſuch Actions may be *materially* wrong, but they are *formally* right; ſince the Agent is ſuppoſed to act to the beſt of his Knowledge.

ART. X. He who acts without any End of Action, acts wrong and fooliſhly.

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* *See* ART. XIII.

ANS.

Ans. If by *End* he meant *Aim*, *View*, *Reaſon*, or *Deſign*, the Propoſition is undeniable. But if by End he meant only ſome *natural Good*, I can by no means agree to it. Conſidered as a *ſenſible* Agent, Man is obliged to make the *Utile* or the *Jucundum* his End; conſidered as a *Moral* Agent, the *Honeſtum*. But what is to be got by aiming at ſuch an End as this? As Matters are wiſely and graciouſly ordered, almoſt every Thing is to be got by it. But ſuppoſing it otherwiſe; as we are *Rational* Beings, we muſt neceſſarily approve of *Reaſon* and *Virtue*: And if we reject what we approve, we are ſelf-condemned. Though Virtue offered us no Reward, we ought to adhere to it, becauſe it is *ſelf-amiable*, and *ſelf-good*. The greateſt, the beſt, and moſt perfect Agent in the Univerſe perpetually acts with this View; though he neither does, nor poſſibly can reap any Advantage from it. He conſtantly acts thus, becauſe it is *right* and *fit* ſo to do. Before any Creatures exiſted, or the Foundations of the World were laid; He ſaw, approved, and admired this eſſential Good, this neceſſary Excellence. —— If *Reaſon* be the proper Guide and Law of our Nature, it can never be wrong to follow it, but it muſt always be wrong to forſake it. To reject as *worthleſs*, what our Judgments pronounce to be moſt *worthy*, is an unnatural Abſurdity, and a practical Contradiction. —— Since Men are *Senſible* Creatures as well as *Rational*, Reaſon

ſon allows them to aim at *Natural Good*, as well as *Moral*. Accordingly the all-wiſe Creator has, in a great Meaſure, linked theſe Ends together, and made them inſeparable: that accidental Oppoſition which we ſometimes find between them in this Life, being, comparatively, inconſiderable. But let us ſuppoſe *Virtue* and *Intereſt* neither in Conjunction nor Oppoſition; or let us ſuppoſe a Man in Poſſeſſion of all his Deſires. Would it, upon this Suppoſition, be *wrong* and *fooliſh* in him, to perform ſeveral Actions, merely becauſe he ſaw them to be juſt, fit, reaſonable, virtuous? If it would, the Conſequence muſt be, that the ſame Action may be *right* and *wrong*, reaſonable and unreaſonable at the ſame Time. I mean, not in different Reſpects, but upon the whole, which is a manifeſt Contradiction.

ART. XI. Reaſon can never be a Rule to us what Ends to propoſe to our ſelves, ſince an End is properly what we follow merely for its own Sake. To give a Reaſon why any Object ought to be purſued as an End, is to ſhew that Object is not really an End, but only the Means leading to it. Nature alone can recommend to us the Ends of our Purſuit; Reaſon can only diſcover the

the moſt probable Means of obtaining them.

Ans. *Reaſon* is not only our *Rule*, conſidered as *Moral Agents*, but it is likewiſe our *End*. It informs us that we ought to regard it as ſuch, and to *follow it for its own Sake*. It is *abſolute Good*, and in the ſtricteſt Senſe *Self-eligible*. It does indeed direct us in the Purſuit of *natural Good*. But is this all that can be ſaid for it? If it be, then Virtue can only be looked upon as miniſterial to Profit and Pleaſure. I think it appears from what I have obſerved, both in theſe and my former Papers, that this is far from being the Caſe. At the ſame Time that the *Sun* gives Light for the meaneſt Occaſions, and loweſt Purpoſes of Life; it illuminates the whole Syſtem, and appears it ſelf the nobleſt Object in it. Thus it is with *Right Reaſon*, or Moral Good. It ſhews indeed how to proceed in our inferior Purſuits, and gives Weight to our leaſt Actions; but at the ſame Time it raiſes our Minds to higher Contemplations, and preſents it ſelf to our View, as an Object of ſupreme Worth, and unrivalled Perfection.

So great and ſplendid did this Good appear to ſome of the ancient Philoſophers, that it dazzled their Eyes, and overpowered their Senſes. All inferior Objects vaniſhed before it, and they could find no Good in any Thing elſe. But as it is not true, that

Virtue

Virtue is the only Good; ſo much leſs is it true, that there is no intrinſick Goodneſs in it; or that it is not worthy to be purſued *for its own Sake*.

It is upon his own Account, and *for his own Sake*, that every *ſenſible Agent* purſues *Pleaſure*, or Gratification; which therefore, in Strictneſs, ſhould not be called *abſolute*, but *relative* * Good: Eſpecially ſince it is no otherwiſe good, than as it ſuits his Faculties, and gratifies his Mind. For I can only conſider *Pleaſure* as a certain Modification of Mind reſulting from the Agreement between Object and Faculty. We diſcover nothing more in it, than that it is grateful to us, or *good for us*. It cannot therefore, I think, be properly called an *abſolute*, or *ſelf-good*. Or if it may, yet it muſt be in another Senſe, than what is meant by the abſolute Goodneſs of *Virtue*. For in Virtue there is an *inherent Worth*, an *objective Perfection*. It is eſſentially good *in it ſelf*, and has no Dependance on any Agents, or any Faculties. As ſuch, it is upon its own Account, and *for its own Sake*, worthy to be choſen and purſued by moral Agents, who cannot but acknowledge and admire its intrinſick Excellence.

It may alſo be queſtioned, whether *Pleaſure* can, in Strictneſs, be called the *ultimate End* of a ſenſible Agent. Conſidered as *ſen-*

* In the former Part, (*Page* 54.) Pleaſure was called *abſolute Good*, but perhaps unadviſedly; or however leſs properly.

ſible, he ſeems to be rather *himſelf* his own ultimate End. He purſues it for *his own Sake*, regards it always with Reference *to himſelf*, and all his Views about it terminate *in himſelf*. However, in an *objective Senſe*, it is manifeſtly his ultimate End; ſince he neither intends nor knows any Thing beyond it. —— But *Virtue* is the ultimate End of a *Moral* Agent, in the ſtricteſt Senſe. As there is nothing beyond it to which it may be referred, but his View terminates in it; ſo he purſues it upon *its own Account*, and for *its own Sake*. In the Purſuit of *Pleaſure*, *Self* is not only regarded, and included, but the Idea is perpetually uppermoſt. In the Purſuit of *Virtue*, *Self* is quite overlooked. A perfect moral Agent, unmindful of himſelf, keeps his Thoughts fixed on the Worth and Dignity of his Object. That is, he acts virtuouſly, not becauſe it is *profitable*, or *pleaſing*; but becauſe it is, in it ſelf, *right* and *fit* ſo to do.

I think it appears from the foregoing Conſiderations, that *Virtue* is the *ultimate End* of a *Moral* Agent, at leaſt in a higher and ſtricter Senſe, than *Pleaſure* is of a *ſenſible* Agent. Even this, we ſee, cannot properly be ſaid to be *followed merely for its own Sake*. Much leſs can *ſubordinate Ends*, which are only purſued *for the ſake* of the *Pleaſure* which is produced or occaſioned by them. *A Reaſon* may always be given for the Purſuit of them; and that Reaſon is *Gratification*. And it comes

comes to the ſame Thing, whether we call them *Means*, or *ſubordinate Ends*. —— Thus, for Inſtance, why does any Man purſue *Fame*, or the Eſteem and Praiſe of his Fellow-Creatures? Conſidered as a *ſenſible* Agent, the Reaſon is *Pleaſure*; Nature having given him a Faculty for the Reliſh of ſuch an Object, and thereby rendered it delightful to him. In reſpect of a *Moral* Agent, the Reaſon is its Subſervience to Morality; as it gives more Room for the Exerciſe of his Virtues, and enables him to be more uſeful and beneficial. —— If it be alledged, that we are led to the Purſuit of this, and other natural Objects, by an *inſtinctive Determination*, or *Affection*, antecedent to all *Reaſons*, Views, or Deſigns; I readily grant it. But this very Inſtinct implies *Pleaſure*, which always accompanies it, whether it be intended or no. And indeed without this, we could not have any *Affection* for any *Objects*; excepting ſuch as are *ſelf-eligible*, or *intrinſically* and *abſolutely Good*. We may conſider *Pleaſure* as the Ligament which ties every *natural Affection* to its proper *Object*. —— Beſides, as ſoon as we are capable of reflecting and exerciſing our Reaſon; inſtead of indulging ſuch *Inſtincts*, and cheriſhing ſuch *Affections*, we ſhould certainly check and reſiſt them; if we neither found *Pleaſure* in them, nor any *moral* Uſefulneſs. Nothing but their Subſervience to one or both of theſe *Ends*, could poſſibly induce us to continue the Purſuit of them.

Upon this Account I do not underſtand, how *Nature can recommend* any particular Objects to our Choice and Purſuit, any otherwiſe than by annexing *Pleaſure* to the Perception of them. If they have no *abſolute objective* Worth, they muſt have ſome *relative* Goodneſs: And what can this be but either *Pleaſure*, or a Tendency thereto? That is, either immediate, or mediate; in Poſſeſſion, or in Proſpect.

As various *Senſes* are given us, both *external* and *internal*, for the Perception of *Pleaſure*, or natural Good; ſo we have a Faculty of a higher Kind for the Perception of *Rectitude*, or moral Good. *Reaſon* or Intelligence, both diſcovers the Worth of this Object, and *recommends it to our Purſuit*. Reaſon cannot indeed inform us what Objects they are which gratify us, or are *good for us*; but it can diſcover Objects *good in themſelves*, and recommend them accordingly.

ART. XII. If therefore to give Pain to a ſenſible Creature be wrong, it muſt be for one of theſe three Reaſons. 1. Either that it thwarts ſome End that we propoſed. 2. Or that it does not tend to promote it. 3. Or that it neceſſarily implies ſome Error or falſe Conception in the Agent. Neither the firſt nor

nor the ſecond Reaſon can be aſſigned, becauſe the Agent is ſuppoſed to be without any Sentiment. And as to the third, if you ſay that ſuch an Action would infer the Agent guilty of ſome Error, or falſe Conception; it is the very Thing to be proved. From the meer Idea of Pain, it no more follows that I ought not to give Pain, than from the Idea of Pleaſure, that I ought not to give Pleaſure. Thus Cruelty is not a ſign of Ignorance, or Error, but want of Sentiment.

Ans. I would by no means found the Pravity or Obliquity of ſuch an Action, on any *Error* of Judgment, or *falſe Conception.* Errors of Judgment, however they may juſtify or excuſe what is *materially* wrong, can never conſtitute any Action immoral. But I found the Obliquity and Immorality of ſuch Actions as we are ſpeaking of, on their Contrariety to the *Reaſons of Things*, and the Violation of *Order* and *Truth.* And in this Reſpect they manifeſtly *thwart* that which is, or ought to be, the principal *End* of every moral Agent. Had we no *Sentiments* or *Inſtincts* at all, our Underſtandings would ſtill ſhew us the Excellence and Self-worth of this End; and inform us, that we ought to purſue

ſue it for its own Sake.—— There is no more Occaſion for a *Sentiment*, to make us diſcover, and approve of *Moral Rectitude*; than there is Occaſion for a Sentiment to make us diſcover and aſſent to any kind of *Truth*.—— To *give Pain therefore*, without Cauſe, *to a ſenſible Creature*, muſt be *wrong*; becauſe it is a Repugnance to Nature, and a Counteraction to Reaſon and Truth. From *the meer Idea of Pain* I infer nothing. But from the Relation or Diſagreement, which I find between Pain and an innocent Sufferer, I infer the unfitneſs of the Application. If *Pain* and *Pleaſure* be equally ſuitable to the Nature of a *ſenſible* Creature, or if they appear ſo *in Idea*, to any Man who has felt both; then let it be allowed, that it is no more unreaſonable to give the one, than the other. But if the contrary be true, the Conſequence muſt prove accordingly. —— If *Cruelty be want of Sentiment*, it is alſo a want of *Virtue*. Whatever a Man's natural *Diſpoſition* may be, his *Actions* may be right; and generally will, if he hearken to the Reaſon of his own Mind. If a Man be ſo void of Compaſſion, or ſo hard-hearted, that he cannot *feel* the *Inhumanity* of certain Actions; yet ſurely he may *underſtand* the *Unreaſonableneſs* of them. For that ſuch Actions are contrary to *Reaſon*, as well as natural *Affection*, has, I preſume, been ſufficiently ſhewn.

ART.

ART. XIII. You ſay, as there is a Difference between the Nature of one Object, and that of another, they require a different Treatment. I anſwer, as far as that Difference affects my End propoſed; or as far as the neglecting ſuch a Difference may infer me guilty of ſome Error, they do ſo. But if I have no Sentiment of Good, my End can no way be affected by the Pleaſure or Pain of a Senſible Creature; and my giving him Pain, allowing no Sentiment, does not infer me guilty of any Error, more than my giving Pleaſure would do.

ANS. If a Rational Agent *give Pain without Cauſe*, whatever his *Thoughts* may be, his *Hands* are very erroneous. I mean, let a Man's Ideas be never ſo clear, his *Will* is faulty, and his *Actions* wrong, if they run counter to the Reaſons and Relations aforeſaid. Nay the clearer his Ideas are, the more blameable he is for not acting conformably to the Light which they give him. And indeed if ſuch Reaſons and Relations were not viſible to him, he would not be guilty in a Moral Senſe; ſince his Offence lies in acting contrary to his Judgment, and the Light of his

his own Mind. *Immorality* does not conſiſt in the Errors of the *Underſtanding*, but the Rebellion of the *Will*. Neither does *Virtue* conſiſt in clear Ideas, or juſt Apprehenſions, but in chuſing to do that which appears right. Whatever Light the Mind has been able to get, is Man's immediate Rule; and if he wills and acts conformably thereto, he is virtuous. —— Moral *Good* is not the Object of *Sentiment* or Senſe, but of *Intelligence* only. Accordingly, every intelligent Agent is capable of perceiving it, and diſcovering the Worth of it. He finds it to be his true *End*, and that he cannot act in Oppoſition to it, without Conſciouſneſs of Guilt, and Self-condemnation. Hence it is that ſuch Actions as we are ſpeaking of, do not only *affect the End* of a Moral Agent, but are directly repugnant to it, and inconſiſtent with it. ——— If we have *a Sentiment of Good*, I ſuppoſe it is allowed that this Good becomes our *End*, and that this *End* is croſſed and counteracted in *giving cauſeleſs Pain*. But why is not a *Rational Perception of Good* as uſeful and effectual as a *Sentiment*? If there be really ſuch a thing as *intelligible Good*, why may it not be judged worthy of our Affection and Purſuit? Certainly there may be valuable Objects that are out of the Reach of *Senſe*. That we are not ſtrictly *ſenſible* of ſuch Objects, cannot therefore be any Objection either againſt their Reality, or Worth. —— But the Truth is, there is ſo ſtrong a Bias on the *ſenſible* Side of Human

man Nature, that not only our Affections, but our very Words and Ideas lean that way. Language is ſo far drawn aſide, and the Signification of Terms ſo much warped towards us, that we are ſcarce able to diſtinguiſh between the *Rectum* and the *Utile*; or to conceive how any thing can be *good*, otherwiſe than as it is *uſeful* or *agreeable* to us. What more common than even for Moraliſts to define Good in general *relatively*, and to confound *abſolute* Good and *intrinſick* Worth, with *Pleaſure* and *Utility*. Hence it is, that in order to conceive *Moral Fitneſs*, they are apt to caſt about, and conſider what *Natural Ends* and Purpoſes it promotes, and what Benefits are to be reaped from it. This is, in Effect, either turning *Moral Fitneſs* into *Natural Fitneſs*, or repreſenting *Virtue* as a mere Hand-maid to *Profit* and *Pleaſure*.

When Pain is given without Cauſe by any Agent, what *End* can he propoſe by ſuch an Action? No other End can be imagined than that of gratifying a cruel and unnatural Diſpoſition. Does not then ſuch an Action conduce to this *End*? I allow that it does. How then can an Action be *wrong*, that conduces to the End propoſed by the Agent? In this Senſe it is not *wrong*; but in another, and a higher Senſe it is. Tho' it be not what may be called a *Phyſical* Obliquity, it is manifeſtly a *Moral* one. *Virtue* is, or ought to be, both *End* and *Means* to every Moral Agent. But if we conſider it only as a *Rule*, it is a Rule

that he can never violate without Guilt and Tranſgreſſion.— A Traveller may go wrong, not only by miſſing his Way, but by not keeping in the High-road. If he break into other Mens Incloſures, pull down their Fences, and trample their Corn, he is certainly *wrong*, tho' he take the very ſhorteſt Cut to his Journey's End.—— When *Tullia*, * the Wife of *Tarquin*, ordered her Chariot to be driven over the dead Body of her Father, ſhe was going the neareſt way to the Palace. She took effectual Care that none ſhould be able to charge her either with Deviation, or Circuition. But nevertheleſs was not her Conduct egregiouſly wrong, and even horrid and execrable? Had ſhe any degree, I will not ſay of Virtue or Honour, but even of Natural Affection or Shame, ſhe would ſooner have choſen to have fetched a Compaſs round the *Roman* Dominions.

ART. XIV. You will ſay, Virtue and Reaſon may themſelves be Ends. I will ſay ſo too. But does this yield any Concluſion? If you can make it appear by Reaſon, without ſuppoſing any Sentiment, that any Obligation to Goodneſs is neceſſarily deducible from the Ideas

* Liv. Lib. I. cap. 48.

of

of Pain and Pleaſure, and the Ideas of a Rational Agent and a Senſible Object, it will be a ſtrong Argument. But this is the very Queſtion.

Ans. If *Virtue* be really an *End*, what can be more natural than to conclude from thence, that it may and ought to be purſued? If it be not worthy of Purſuit, it is not an *End*; and if it be worthy of Purſuit, the Inference is very plain. How *Obligation is deducible from the Ideas of Pain and Pleaſure, Agent and Object*, and the Relations interceding between them, has been ſhewn under the foregoing Articles. See *Numb.* V and VI.

Art. XV. You will argue, that if Virtue it ſelf be an End, the Conſequence is, that a Man ought not to give Pain to a ſenſible Creature. But firſt ſhew what Virtue is without Sentiment. If there be no Sentiment, I do not ſee how Virtue or Reaſon can have any Influence in this Caſe; or even that there can be any ſuch Thing as Virtue.

Ans. *Virtue, without Sentiment*, is acting agreeably to the *Reaſons* and *Relations* of Things. It is Conformity to *Order* and *Truth*. I before endeavoured to ſhew that *Moral Fit-*

ſs muſt needs be the Rule of all Rational Beings, and that the Deity Himſelf is eternally directed by it. I ſhall here add the following Conſideration. The Author of the *Enquiry, &c.* ſuppoſes a certain * *Diſpoſition eſſential to the Deity correſponding to the Affections He has given us*; and that He is continually influenced and determined by it in all his Proceedings.—— If this be a true Idea of God's *Moral Perfection*; if He be conſtantly acted by a Principle of *infinite Benevolence*, and have no other Regard to intrinſick *Order*, *Fitneſs*, *Rectitude*, than as conducing to the Production of *Natural Good*; it follows from thence, that He muſt at all Times, and in all Places, that is, from Eternity, and through all the Regions of infinite Space, have produced the very utmoſt Poſſibilities of *Natural Good*. He muſt have created, from everlaſting, as many Worlds, and as many Creatures, as could poſſibly co-exiſt. He muſt have given all his Creatures the higheſt Talents and Perfections that were conſiſtent with publick Intereſt, and the Advantage of the Whole. Tho' that *Scale of Beings*, which is partly diſcoverable at preſent, be moſt wonderfully regular and orderly, and therefore highly agreeable to the *Wiſdom* and *Rectitude* of the Divine Nature; yet who can affirm, or even ſuppoſe, that the preſent Order and Conſtitution of the Univerſe comprehends as much *Natural*

* Illuſtrations, Page 239. *and elſewhere.*

Good,

Good, as infinite Power could poſſibly have produced? —— Again, how ſhall we account, upon this Suppoſition, for the Introduction of *Evil*, either *Natural* or *Moral*? If *Reaſon* and *Rectitude* are out of the Queſtion, what is the Meaning of theſe Hardſhips, Sufferings and Diſtreſſes which infeſt Human Life? Are they the natural Conſequences of Sin and Folly? Infinite Power might either prevent ſuch Conſequences, or have given us ſuch a Frame as would have render'd us incapable of being affected by them. —— Beſides, why are we not created impeccable? Why are we obnoxious to Sin and Folly? Why not made neceſſarily wiſe and good? Why were not invincible Propenſities to Goodneſs planted in our Natures, for the Prevention of Evil both Natural and Moral? Theſe and many other Queſtions are eaſy to be anſwered by thoſe who acknowledge a Principal of *real Rectitude*, and *Moral Fitneſs*. But if we reject this Principle, and ſubſtitute in the room of it the benevolent *Diſpoſition* before-mentioned; I am not able to conceive how theſe and the like Queſtions can admit of any ſatisfactory Anſwer. ——— I humbly ſuppoſe it eſſentially unfit, unbecoming the Supreme Being, and repugnant to his Nature, to produce Irregularity, Diſorder, Confuſion of any kind, whatever Advantage or Natural Good might poſſibly redound from thence to his Creatures. He has doubtleſs conferred upon them as great a Share of this Good as

is

is conſiſtent with abſolute *Rectitude*, and intrinſick *Fitneſs*. But ſurely it is going too far to imagine that the Deity ſhould ſacrifice *Moral Good* to *Natural*. In this Senſe, as I apprehend it, He ever primarily regards his own *Glory*, That is, *Truth*, *Order*, *Rectitude* are his own neceſſary and eſſential Perfections, which morally ſpeaking, He can no more violate, or counteract, than He can deny Himſelf. Accordingly, when he is ſaid to *glorify* Himſelf, we ought, I think, to put this Conſtruction upon it, and to conſider Him as under a Moral Neceſſity of inviolably obſerving and maintaining his own Glorious Attributes. And ſurely it muſt be highly juſt and fitting, that all intelligent Creatures pay him a ſuitable Homage, Compliance, and Submiſſion. —— But to return: As far as *Natural Good*, and *Moral* are coincident, or whenever they are capable of being connected; in all ſuch Caſes there is no room for the foregoing Obſervations. But if there might poſſibly have been more *Natural Good* in the Univerſe, than there is, which I know not how to avoid ſuppoſing, I humbly conceive it is to be accounted for in the Manner above-mentioned. I mean, that the Deity will not, and in a Moral Senſe cannot, give up *Abſolute Good* for the ſake of *relative Good*; nor act repugnantly to *Order* and *Truth*, for the *Benefit* of any Creatures, or any Conſideration whatever. If this Concluſion be juſt, and likewiſe the Suppoſition from whence it is drawn; then we have

have here a full Proof not only of the *Reality*, but alſo of the *Supremacy* of that Principle, which I call *Rectitude*, or *Moral Fitneſs*. —— But whether that Suppoſition be juſt or no, the Reality of this Principle appears to me very evident, as I have endeavoured to ſhew, both in my former Papers, and in theſe. If the *Reaſons* and *Relations* of Things be not real, and certain, our Underſtandings perpetually delude us, and what we call *Truth* is nothing but Fiction and Amuſement. And if thoſe *Relations* be real, they muſt needs conſtitute that *Moral Fitneſs*, from which our *Obligations* are plainly deducible, in the manner above-mentioned. This then is what I call *Virtue*, independent of all *Sentiments* and *Inſtincts*.

ART. XVI. However general the Approbation of Goodneſs may be, many thinking and reaſoning Men have acknowledged they were at a Loſs, when they would demonſtrate the Obligation of any Part of Morality. Mr. *Locke*, who ſo well underſtood the Anatomy of Ideas, does not find any Principles of Morality neceſſarily included in our Moral Ideas. On the contrary, he leaves the whole Queſtion of the Demonſtration

monſtration of the firſt Principles of Morality, as a Matter that might indeed be compaſſed, but which he did not undertake to give a thorough Account of. Nor need we be ſurprized at this, ſince the Underſtanding, and not the Sentiments, was the Subject of his Undertaking; and that excellent Philoſopher was wholly taken up with intellectual Reflections. But Mr. *Hutchinſon* ſeems to have ſupplied that Defect.

Ans. Had *Morality* been examined, ſtudied, and explained with as much Care and Accuracy as ſome other Sciences have been, I doubt not but its main Principles had long ago been ſet in as clear a Light as any Propoſitions in *Euclid*. If *many thinking Men have been at a Loſs* in demonſtrating Moral Obligations, I preſume it may be accounted for, partly from what I have juſt now obſerved, and partly from their fixing of Morality on a wrong Foundation. This ſeems to have been the Caſe of Mr. *Locke* himſelf, who tho' he performed excellently in moſt Things, and ſet *Human Underſtanding* in a better and clearer Light than had ever been done before him, yet has not been able to exempt himſelf from the common Lot of Humanity. He has erred and misjudged ſometimes; and perhaps no

no where more than in his *Moral* Notions, which he ſeems not to have conſidered and weighed with his uſual Care and Exactneſs.— He tells us * that *the true Ground of Morality can only be the Will and the Law of God.* † Elſewhere he affirms, that *the Divine Law, or that Law which God has ſet to the Actions of Men, is the only true Touchſtone of Moral Rectitude.* If the *Will of God be the true Ground of Morality*, I ask, What is the *true Ground* of his own Moral Perfections? Moſt certainly they are not *groundleſs.* And it is equally certain, that his *Will* can be no Law to Himſelf; ſince upon that Suppoſition He would be *arbitrary* in all his Proceedings. Whatever be the *true Ground* of Moral Goodneſs in the Deity, muſt alſo be the true Ground of the Moral Goodneſs of his Creatures; ſince His Goodneſs and theirs, tho' infinitely different in *Degree*, muſt needs be of the ſame *Kind.* Except therefore we ſuppoſe the Conduct of the Deity either *neceſſary* or *arbitrary*, we muſt allow it to be founded on *Moral Fitneſs*, and the *Reaſons of Things.* And by Conſequence, the Moral Goodneſs of his Creatures muſt unavoidably ſtand upon the ſame Foundation.

I beg leave to obſerve upon this Occaſion, that I have often wondered to find Mr. *Locke*, as well as other Authors, perpetually con-

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* Eſſay on Human Underſtanding, Book I. Chap. iii, Sect. 6.
† Ibid. Book II. Chap. xxviii. Sect. 8.

founding *Moral Virtue* and *Religion*. It is manifeſt that *Religion* is immediately founded on the *Divine Will*, which is the true Rule of all *Religious* Agents. But if we conſider Men as *Moral* Agents, their true and immediate Rule is *Moral Fitneſs*, or thoſe *Reaſons of Things*, by which the Will of God himſelf is eternally directed. Tho' therefore *Religion* and *Moral Goodneſs* may be looked upon as coincident, both in reſpect of their ultimate Ground, and the Agreement of their Precepts; yet upon ſeveral Accounts we ought not to confound theſe Ideas, which are in themſelves diſtinct. The Deity is incapable of *Religion*; but in all *Moral Goodneſs* is infinitely perfect. As to Man, tho' it muſt be allowed, that thoſe Actions of his which flow from a Regard to *Right Reaſon*, and the Love of *Virtue*, are the pureſt and moſt perfect of which he is capable; yet he ſtands in great need of *Religion*, as being too corrupt, and too headſtrong to be guided by the intellectual Reins of *Reaſon*, and *Moral Rectitude*.——For a long time Tryal was made of a great Part of Mankind, how far this Principle would prevail, and what Regard would be ſhewn to the Rules and Dictates of natural Reaſon. But the Generality of the World were ſo far from obſerving them, that they had almoſt effaced them. God was pleaſed therefore to reinforce *Virtue* with *Religion*; to give Men new Light, and new Laws, and to ſtrengthen thoſe Laws by powerful

powerful Sanctions. I grant indeed, that before this the Heathens were under *Religious* as well as *Moral* Obligations. But through their own Folly and Negligence, they ſeem to have underſtood very little of *Natural Religion*. They rarely conſidered Virtue as the Will and Law of God; or any otherwiſe than as the Voice of Nature, and the Suggeſtion of Right Reaſon.——Whatever Pre-eminence may be due to Virtue, on account of its intrinſick Excellence and Dignity, yet the Authority and Majeſty of Religion ſeem much fitter, and more effectual to reſtrain licentious Men, and govern a degenerate World. Thoſe purer Beings, which are of an Order ſuperior to Human Nature, need not perhaps any other Rule than that internal one of *Reaſon* or *Virtue*: But our frail and faulty Species wants both another Law, and a Legiſlator, to curb their Follies and Vices, and keep them in ſome meaſure within the Bounds of their Duty.

To return to Mr. *Locke*; The following Paſſage plainly informs us what he thought of the Demonſtrability of moral Principles. *I doubt not*, ſays * he, *but from ſelf-evident Propoſitions, by neceſſary Conſequences as inconteſtable as thoſe in Mathematicks, the Meaſures of Right and Wrong might be made out, to any one that will apply himſelf with the ſame Indif-*

* Ibid. Book IV. Chap. iii. Sect. 18. See alſo Chap. XII. Sect. 8.

ference and Attention to the one, as he does to the other of theſe Sciences. The Relation of other Modes may certainly be perceived, as well as thoſe of Number and Extenſion: Aud I cannot ſee why they ſhould not alſo be capable of Demonſtration, if due Methods were thought on to examine, or purſue their Agreement or Diſagreement. Had Mr. *Locke* fixed Morality on its true Foundation, he would have been ſtill further ſatisfied about this Matter; and have diſcovered more fully the Juſtneſs of theſe Obſervations. Thoſe *Relations* of Agreement and Diſagreement between Agents, Actions and Object, which conſtitute *Right* and *Wrong*, are much more obvious than ſome others which he examined and explained in the moſt accurate Manner: And how he happened to overlook them, I cannot take upon me to determine. But he tells us himſelf †, that ſuppoſing his *Rule erroneous*, ——— *he is not miſtaken in the Relation which Actions bear to that Rule he compares them to, which is Agreement, or Diſagreement.*

The foregoing Paſſages plainly ſhew, if I miſtake not, that Mr. *Locke* looked upon *the Principles of Morality as neceſſarily included*, ſome way or other, *in our Ideas.* But it muſt be confeſſed, that he does not always expreſs himſelf conformably to ſuch an Opinion, or his Declarations above cited. For how ſhall

† Book II. Chap. xxxiii. Sect. 20.

we reconcile herewith, his denying † any *practical Principles to be ſelf-evident?* If no practical Principles be ſelf-evident, I ſee no Poſſibility of reducing Morality to Demonſtration; every Demonſtration being only a Chain of ſelf-evident Propoſitions. I am ſo far from thinking *no practical Principles to be ſelf-evident*, that I look upon them all as either ſelf-evident, or reducible to ſelf-evident Propoſitions. How our *Obligations* are connected with *moral Fitneſs*, and the *Reaſons of Things*, has been already ſhewn. Now in all ordinary Caſes, that is, in all Caſes where the *Relations* above-mentioned are viſible to us; that *moral Fitneſs* is either immediately ſelf-evident, as in *ſimple* Duties; or demonſtrable, as in *complex* ones. This Self-evidence I have before had Occaſion to conſider in ſome Inſtances, and may perhaps have further Occaſion hereafter. However, it may not be improper to produce one more in this Place.

It is morally fit that Man reverence his Maker, is a Propoſition ſelf-evident to all that rightly underſtand the Terms. It would be as abſurd *to demand a Reaſon* for it, which is Mr. *Locke*'s Teſt of Self-evidence, as to ask why any *Whole is greater than a Part*. No Reaſons can be aſſigned for either, but ſuch as are *Identical*. If a Man have a falſe Con-

† Book I. Chap. iii. Sect. 4.

ception

ception of the Deity, in reſpect of that Man the Propoſition may want Evidence, or Proof; but otherwiſe, it has all the Evidence, and all the Light, that any Principle can have. Between the Ideas of the Agent, and the Action on one Hand, and the Idea of an all-perfect Object on the other Hand; the Relation of *Fitneſs* or Congruity is as manifeſt, as the Relation of *Equality* between *twice Three and Six*. On the contrary, a *cubical Inch* may as well be imagined commenſurate to *infinite Space*, as *irreverent* Thoughts, Words or Actions, be apprehended ſuitable from *Man* towards his *Maker*. There is equally, in both Caſes, an eſſential and everlaſting Repugnance to the Truth and Natures of Things, immediately viſible to every Underſtanding. And the ſame Obſervation might be carried on through a great Number of Moral Principles, in which is to be found the like immediate Agreement or Diſagreement.

If it be true, that Mr. *Locke* did not place Moral Virtue on its proper Foundation; I can by no Means think, that Mr. *Hutchinſon* has ſupplied that Defect. So far from it, that it ſeems to me much better to found it as Mr. *Locke* does, than to fix it upon *Inſtincts*. The *Will* of the Deity, which is Mr. *Locke*'s Foundation, is the true Ground, if not of *Moral Virtue*, yet of *Religion*. But *Inſtincts* cannot, I think, be eſſential to either. In ſeveral other Reſpects Morality is indebted to Mr. *Hutchinſon*; but in this I pre-

preſume he has injured it: Though certainly without the leaſt Intention of ſo doing. In ſhort, the more I conſider it, the more I am convinced, that nothing can ſupport *Virtue*, either honourably or ſecurely, but *Truth* and *Right Reaſon*.

ART. XVII. What you call *Moral Perception*, can be nothing elſe but Mr. *Hutchinſon*'s *Moral Senſe*. The Agreements and Diſagreements of Moral Actions are allowed on both Sides to be very apparent. But that a Power of perceiving ſuch Agreements and Diſagreements ought to be called a Senſe, or Sentiment, I think is very manifeſt.

ANS. What Mr. *Hutchinſon* means, or ſeems to mean by his *Moral Senſe*, I conſidered, and endeavoured to ſhew in my former Papers. What I mean by *Moral Perception*, if it do not already ſufficiently appear, ſhall be here further explained——*Moral Perception*, conſidered *objectively*, is the Agreement or Diſagreement of Moral Ideas. Conſidered *in it ſelf*, it is an Operation of that Power, or Faculty of the Mind, by which we are enabled to perceive ſuch Agreements or Diſagreements. Such *Truth*, in general, conſiſts in the Agreement or Diſagreement of Ideas, and is the Object only of that Faculty

Faculty which we call *Underſtanding*; I therefore conclude, that *Moral Perception* differs from *Intellectual*, no otherwiſe than as any *Species* differs from its *Genus*. *Moral Rectitude* is a Species of *Truth*, and therefore ſtrictly *intelligible*. —— I am not able to diſcover the leaſt Reaſon why *Moral Perceptions* ſhould not be aſcribed to the *Underſtanding* as well as *Mathematical* ones. Of the two, *Moral Perceptions* may ſeem more *intellectual* than the other; *Figures* are properly Objects of *Imagination*, however they may be improved and perfected by the *Underſtanding*. Some indeed are ſo very much compounded, that we cannot *imagine* them; or but very imperfectly. Their Sides and Angles are ſo numerous, that the *Imagination* cannot graſp them; but is forced to borrow the Aſſiſtance of the *Underſtanding*. However, ſuch *Figures* are *Images*, though our *Imaginations* be too narrow to receive them. But *Virtues* and *Vices*, *Reaſons* and *Relations* are, in themſelves, utterly *unimaginable*; and therefore no Objects of ſuch a Faculty, however capacious.

If any one has a mind to call that Faculty, by which we perceive *Moral* Agreements and Diſagreements, an *internal Senſe*; I am very unwilling to diſpute about Words. But then, if he be conſiſtent with himſelf, he muſt give the ſame Name to that Faculty, by which we perceive *Phyſical*, or *Mathematical* Agreements. That is, he muſt call *Intelli-*

gence

gence an *internal Senſe*. Whatever it be called, the thing which I contend for is, that we perceive *Moral* Relations by the ſame Faculty that we perceive any other Relations. That as *Truth* in general is the Object of that Faculty which is commonly called the *Underſtanding*; ſo *Moral Rectitude* is a Species of *Truth*, and therefore only *intelligible*. To repreſent Truth, of any Kind, as an Object of any other Faculty, than that of *Underſtanding*, tends, I think, to introduce the utmoſt Confuſion both in our Words and Ideas.

Every one will allow, in reſpect of our *external Senſes*, that they are very diſtinct from the *Underſtanding*; as being indeed only miniſterial to it, and ſupplying it with Materials for Thought and Reflection. There is evidently as much Difference between them, as between an *Architect*, and the *Labourers* employed under him. But the Queſtion is, whether we have not alſo other Senſes of a ſuperior Kind. Let a Man's *Underſtanding* be never ſo good, and his external Senſe of *Hearing* never ſo quick, he may ſtill want an *Ear* for *Muſick*. In like Manner, though his *Underſtanding* and *Sight* be both good, he may nevertheleſs want an *Eye* for *Paintings*, for *Statues*, for *Buildings*. Hence the Author of *The Inquiry*, &c. plauſibly concludes in Favour of *Internal Senſes*. Allowing then his Concluſion to be juſt; nothing, I think, can be inferred from hence, but that ſuch

Perſons are incapable of reliſhing ſuch Objects, or taſting the *Pleaſure* which they produce in the Minds of others. It will by no means follow, that *Moral*, or any other *intellectual* Perceptions may be aſcribed to any ſuch *internal Senſe*. For however ſuch a *Senſe* may affect the Mind, or raiſe in it a Pleaſure which it would otherwiſe want; yet it can go no further. It communicates to it no Agreements or Diſagreements, but thoſe of the Object with it ſelf. The *Relations* of Things themſelves are out of its Reach.——— If *Truth* be not the proper Object of the *Underſtanding*; we either have no ſuch Faculty, or that Faculty is without an Object. If then *Moral Rectitude* be one kind of *Truth*, it muſt be the Object of *Intelligence* only. And if it be not one kind of *Truth*, we muſt find out ſomething elſe to conſtitute Truth, beſides the *Agreement of Ideas*.

If it be urged, that this is equally applicable to *Beauty* and *Harmony*, which conſiſt alſo in the Agreements and Proportions of Ideas; I anſwer, that ſuch Agreements either really intercede between the Objects themſelves, or they are only arbitrary Accommodations to their reſpective Faculties. If they really intercede between the Ideas themſelves, they are only *intelligible*, and not the Objects of any *Senſe*. If the Agreement be only between the *Faculty* and the *Object*, it then amounts to nothing more than a *ſenſible* Perception.

ception.——— I muſt explain my ſelf by Inſtances. Between the Numbers 2, 8, 32, there is a real Agreement of *Proportion*; and between the *Three Angles of an equilateral Triangle*, a real Agreement of *Equality*. Such Agreements eſſentially belong to the Ideas themſelves; independently of the Faculty, and even of the Creator's Will. This is, in the moſt proper Senſe, *Truth*; abſolute, objective Truth; and as ſuch, can only be the Object of *Intelligence*. —— Between a certain kind of *Food*, and a Man's *Palate*, between a certain *Proſpect*, and his *Eye*; between a certain Combination of *Sounds*, and his *Ear*; there is only an arbitrary Agreement of the Object with the Faculty. For whatever *real Order*, or *Proportion*, there may be among the ſeveral Parts of complex ſenſible Objects; theſe, like all other Relations, can only be apprehended by the *Underſtanding*. *Senſe* judges of nothing but its own *Senſations*. Hence we find an endleſs Variety in Mens *Taſtes* and *Fancies*, but not in their *Underſtandings*. I mean, in reſpect of ſuch Truths as we have been conſidering. The Agreements between the *Numbers* and *Angles* above-mentioned, appear uniformly and univerſally the ſame, to all Beings capable of underſtanding them. And the ſame may be ſaid of the Agreement between *Benefits* and *Gratitude*, and other *Moral* Truths. In all ſuch Caſes the Agreements are not *relative*, but *real*, as being inherent in the Ideas themſelves. A Power of

perceiving theſe *real* Agreements, I call *Intelligence*; a Power of perceiving the other, *Senſe*.

If *a Power of perceiving* real *Agreements ought to be called a Senſe, or Sentiment*; what Partition, what Boundaries will remain between *Senſe* and *Intelligence?* Why ſhould we confound the Terms, if the Things ſignified by them be really different? And that they are different, widely different, in ſeveral Reſpects; is, with me, out of all Queſtion. It may be ſufficient to obſerve at preſent, that every *Senſation* is a *Modification* of the Mind it ſelf, which is really affected by it, according to the Nature of the Senſe, and the Object, and the Degree of the Senſation. The Mind is hereby put, as it were, into a new State. But *intellectual Perception*, conſidered as ſuch, does not thus affect the Mind, or give it any new *Modification*. It only ſhews it what its Objects are in themſelves; wherein they agree with, or differ from each other. Both *Senſe* and *Intelligence* conſiſt in a Power of *Perception*; and both the Powers are *paſſive*. But I know of no other Reſemblance between them. *Senſe* furniſhes the Mind with its Ideas: But can Senſe *examine* and *compare* theſe Ideas? Can it perceive any *Relations* between them? Can it proceed to *Diſpoſition, Diviſion, Abſtraction, Compoſition?* Can it diſcover *Cauſes, Effects, Connections, Conſequences?* If any *Senſe* be capable of *Moral Perceptions*, then it may be capable of theſe and the like intellectual Functions. And if ſo, what

what Occaſion have we for that Faculty, which we call *Intelligence*? —— I ſhall only obſerve further, that *Brutes* have various *Senſes*; both external, and perhaps internal. They have likewiſe various *Inſtincts*, *Propenſities*, and *Preſenſations*. But, if I miſtake not, they have not the leaſt degree of *Intelligence*. They cannot, I preſume, perceive any *Relations*; and are therefore utterly incapable of *Knowledge*. We do not diſcover that they have any Power at all over their own Ideas; much leſs, that they are capable of any of the forementioned Operations. They ſeem conſtantly and uniformly to follow the Direction of their ſeveral *Inſtincts*, and every Species obſerves its own Track. If theſe Suppoſitions be true, as I am perſuaded they are, they not only aſcertain the Diſtinction between *Senſibility* and *Intelligence*, but may ſerve to convince us of the Uſe and Importance of ſuch a Diſtinction.

ART. XVIII. Obligation can certainly be no ſimple Idea. If then it be properly an Object of the Underſtanding, what are the Ideas whereof it is compounded? This Moral Perception, whereby the Reaſonableneſs of Goodneſs and Gratitude appears ſo clearly, is no doubt ſomething diſtinct from the Ideas

Ideas themſelves of Gratitude and Goodneſs. I cannot find that any ſort of Obligation is included merely in thoſe Ideas. Beſides, this Moral Perception muſt not only be an Idea, whether Simple or Compound, but it muſt comprehend ſome Propoſition, or Affirmation; as that a Man ought to be grateful, or that he ought to deſire the Good of others. But I do not ſee any ſuch Propoſitions as theſe included in thoſe Ideas.

Ans. The Subſtance of this Article has been ſo largely conſidered under the Numbers 4, 5, and 6, that I ſhall need to add very little here. *Obligation* may be conſidered as an Attachment of the Mind to ſome *Object* which appears *Self-eligible*. Such an Object neceſſarily produces Approbation and Affection in the Mind of the Perceiver; who is thereby continually prompted to purſue it. Whenever he has it in View, he unavoidably perceives an Inducement, a Motive, a Reaſon for the Choice of it; and that in Proportion to the Worth and Dignity of the Object. This Power, or Fitneſs, which it has to work upon his *Will*; is what brings his Mind into that State which I call *Obligation*. Thus, conſidered as a *ſenſible* Agent, he is

obliged

obliged to purſue *Pleaſure*; as a *Moral* Agent, *Virtue*. In both Caſes the Mind is *drawn*, but not *driven*; that is, *obliged*, but not *compelled*. Every Solicitation of Senſe, not injurious to animal Life, would be really *obligatory*, if not over-ruled by ſome ſuperior *Motive*, ſome ſtronger *Obligation*. ——— It is very true that Obligation muſt be *ſomething diſtinct from the Ideas of Gratitude and Goodneſs*. As diſtinct as any *Effect* is from its *Cauſe*. *Obligation* is not *Virtue*, or Moral Rectitude, but the Effect produced in the Mind by the Influence and Operation of that excellent Object.

ART. XIX. On the contrary, I can eaſily define what I mean by Moral Sentiment, *viz.* A Faculty whereby I am diſpoſed to approve a certain End. Allowing ſuch a Faculty, I can eaſily deduce the Obligation or Reaſonableneſs of Morality. This I cannot do merely by a Compariſon of any Ideas whatever, without ſuch a Faculty ſuppoſed.

ANS. I cannot diſcover that we need any other Faculty for this Purpoſe, than that of *Reaſon* or *Intelligence*. For by this Faculty we not only may, but muſt *approve a certain End*. And that ſuch an End, if I miſtake not,

not, as cannot poſſibly be perceived by any *Senſe*. That *abſolute Good*, that *objective Perfection* which is to be found in *Virtue*, or Moral Rectitude, is to be apprehended by no other Faculty than that of *Underſtanding*. But ſuppoſing it the Object of a *Moral Sentiment*, how is *the Reaſonableneſs of Morality*, or conſequent *Obligation*, more *eaſily deduced*, this way than the other? Will Conformity to a certain *Senſe* render any Thing more *reaſonable*, than Conformity to the *Underſtanding*? Certainly nothing can be more reaſonable than that which *Reaſon* it ſelf approves. And as to *Obligation*, that is proportionable to the Worth and Weight of the *Motive*, or the Dignity of the *End* in view, by whatever Faculty it be perceived—— By the *Compariſon of Ideas*, and the *Relations* belonging to them, we plainly diſcover, how ſuch an *Action* is fit for ſuch an *Agent*, towards ſuch an *Object*. And how *Obligation* follows from hence, and is connected with *Moral Fitneſs*, has been ſhown before.

ART. XX. You ſay, if there be a Moral Rectitude, you doubt not but our Underſtandings are capable of perceiving it. I believe ſo, and that there is a Moral Rectitude; but not ſuch a one as can ſubſiſt without Sentiment.

ANS.

Ans. If that Faculty, by which we judge of *Moral Rectitude*, be really a *Senſe*; and that Senſe diſtinct from Intelligence; I cannot comprehend how our *Underſtandings* are any way concerned in ſuch Perceptions. At leaſt, I cannot ſee that there is any Occaſion for them. *Moral Rectitude* is *Truth*; and if *Truth* be an Object of any *Senſe*, and that Senſe in our Poſſeſſion, the *Underſtanding*, which has no other Object than *Truth*, muſt needs be concluded either an uſeleſs, or at leaſt, a ſupernumerary Faculty. For if ſuch a *Senſe* be ſufficient for the Purpoſes of *Morality*, it may well be allowed ſufficient for inferior Sciences. *Moral Rectitude* is not only *Truth*, but the nobleſt, and moſt important Branch of it. And from hence it ſeems to follow very plainly, that if our *intelligent* Faculty be not concerned here, it is concerned no where.

Art. XXI. You think Mr. *Hutchinſon* makes Moral Rectitude to conſiſt in nothing elſe, but a Correſpondence with Sentiment. He does ſo, and the Nature of the Thing requires it. It is alſo on this Account, that it is agreeable to Reaſon. For upon theſe Principles the Reaſonableneſs of Morality may be demonſtrated.

Ans. Why is any Moral Action *right*? And why does the Mind *approve* it as ſuch? According to Mr. *Hutchinſon*, the Anſwers are, Becauſe ſuch an Action is agreeable to an implanted *Affection*, and appears conformable to the *Moral Senſe*. If this Scheme be true, it ſeems to me that nothing in Morality is capable of being *demonſtrated*. I have no other Idea of *Demonſtration*, but that of ſhewing how one thing *neceſſarily* follows from another, and is eſſentially connected with it. But what room is there for this in *Morality* on Mr. *Hutchinſon*'s Principles? Such an Action agrees not with my *Taſte*; or is repugnant to my *Moral Senſe*. What does this prove? Nothing more than that the Action appears *wrong* to me. It is ſo far from proving it to be wrong in it ſelf, that it does not prove the Action muſt have ſuch an Appearance to any other Perſon. Another Man's *Moral Senſe* may poſſibly be quite different from mine. And either his or mine may poſſibly be altered the next Minute. The bare Poſſibility of this, is an effectual Bar to ſuch a Proof.

But will not that *Diſpoſition*, and that Principle in the Deity, which are ſuppoſed to correſpond to our *Natural Affections*, and *Moral Senſe*, certainly incline him univerſally to communicate and continue the ſame *Senſe* to all Rational Agents? I anſwer, That this being the Ground or Foundation of the ſuppoſed Demonſtration here ſpoken of, muſt it

ſelf

ſelf be antecedently proved: Otherwiſe, whatever is built upon it, or deduced from it, muſt be precarious and uncertain. Now there is no way to ſecure this Fundamental Point, but by ſhewing, that ſuch a *Diſpoſition* in the Deity is ſtrictly *neceſſary*. And this, I preſume, is not poſſible to be ſhewn. To ſuppoſe the Benevolence of the Deity ſtrictly neceſſary, is to reſolve all his Proceedings and Diſpenſations into abſolute *Fatality*. On this Suppoſition, his Favours and Bounties are not any Favours at all, but neceſſary and unavoidable Communications. And the Conſequence of this would be, that the greateſt Bleſſings in the World would lay us under no Obligation at all. The *neceſſary Benevolence* of the Deity, is therefore ſo far from being *demonſtrable*, that it is an utter Impoſſibility. Thus I think it appears, that whoever undertakes to demonſtrate Morality by the ſole Principle of *Senſe*, or *Sentiment*, is ſo far from being able to ſucceed, that he has no Ground to ſtand upon, no Place to ſet his Foot.

If Morality was founded on *Inſtincts*, we could no more demonſtrate the intrinſick Preferableneſs of one *Action* to another, than that of one *Colour* to another. Every Agent would know, or to ſpeak more properly, would be *ſenſible*, which Actions *pleaſed* him, and which *diſpleaſed* him; but in themſelves, they would be all equally valuable, or rather equally worthleſs.

But are not thoſe Actions *right* and *fit*, which conduce to the *End* propoſed by the Agent? In this Reſpect I allow they are. But this is only a *relative*, extrinſick *Rectitude*. The procuring of a rich Perfume, or a fine Proſpect, is *right* and reaſonable in the ſame Senſe. Certainly nothing of this kind can deſerve the Name of *Moral Rectitude*.

Actions *relatively right*, that is, conducing to ſome End of the Agent, may not only want *Moral*, but even *Natural Rectitude*. Thus when with ſome View of private Intereſt, a *Mechanick* departs from the Truth and Regularity of Workmanſhip; or an *Architect* tranſgreſſes the Rules of Order and Proportion, however their Actions may conduce to the propoſed *End*, they are neither *right* according to *Art*, nor *Nature*. Whatever they may be in a *relative* Senſe, they are *abſolutely* and intrinſically *wrong*. Works of Art are more or leſs perfect in Proportion to their *Conformity* to *Truth*. And this *Conformity to Truth*, when carried on to Life and Manners, commences *Moral Rectitude*. I need not obſerve, how much more important thoſe Actions muſt be, which are directed to *ſenſible* and *intelligent* Objects, than thoſe which are directed to *inanimate* ones. The *Relations* interceding between *Mind* and *Mind*, muſt needs be of great Weight and Moment, and that Moment be increaſed in Proporttion to the Dignity

Dignity of the *Agent* and *Object*. But it may not be improper to take Notice, that Communication of *Natural Good*, is by no means an eſſential Ingredient of *Moral Rectitude*. —— If no Natural End, if the Happineſs of no Being whatever could poſſibly be promoted by it, it would ſtill be the Duty of every intelligent Creature to reverence and worſhip the Deity. What is it then that makes ſuch an Action reaſonable in ſuch a Circumſtance? Or upon what Account is the Agent obliged to perform it? On Account of its inherent, eſſential *Fitneſs*, which cannot be diſregarded without a groſs Violation of *Order* and *Truth*. The Supremacy, and infinite Perfection of ſuch an Object infinitely heightens that *Fitneſs*, and makes it in the higheſt degree *reaſonable*, even ſuppoſing no Advantage did or could redound from it to any Agent whatever. And hence, I think, it plainly appears, that *Moral Rectitude*, conſidered abſtractedly from all other Views, is it ſelf the true and ultimate End of all Rational Beings.

ART. XXII. But you think this is a variable Foundation, and therefore diſhonourable to Virtue. I ſee no Reaſon to think ſo: Though if it were ſo, this would be no concluſive

ſive Objection, if no other Foundation for Virtue could be ſhewn.

Ans. I ſhould think this Foundation *diſhonourable*, whether it were *variable* or no. But *variable* it muſt be, if it may at any time be *varied*. And I have ſhewn, that there is nothing to hinder ſuch a Variation, unleſs theſe *Inſtincts* depend on the forementioned *Diſpoſition* in the Deity, and that *Diſpoſition* be ſtrictly *neceſſary*. Which latter Suppoſition is attended with ſuch abſurd and ſhocking Conſequences, as render it altogether incredible, and indeed impoſſible. What is there then to ſecure a Continuance of theſe ſuppoſed *Inſtincts*? ——— Were the Will of the Supreme Agent ſuppoſed to be influenced and directed by the *Reaſons of Things*, then indeed theſe *Inſtincts* might be looked upon as ſtable and ſecure; or at leaſt they would certainly be never *varied* or removed, while the Reaſons for the Continuance laſted. But that is not ſuppoſed, nor allowed; and indeed if it were, it would be wholly needleſs to ſeek for any other Foundation for Virtue. It follows therefore, that theſe *Inſtincts* muſt needs be *variable*, as depending ſolely on undirected Will and Pleaſure.

But it may deſerve to be conſidered, whether they be not alſo *variable* in another Reſpect. Tho' all Men be naturally endued with

with ſome Degrees of *Humanity* and *Benevolence*; yet through a corrupt Education, and vicious Habits, may not thoſe *Sentiments* be in a great meaſure effaced, and even contrary ones imbibed? May not Compaſſion be turned into Cruelty, Benevolence into Barbarity, Human Affections into Brutal ones. If we examine the Conduct of ſuch Men-Monſters as *Nero*, and *Caligula*, what Remains, what Traces ſhall we find either of *Natural Affection*, or the *Moral Senſe?*

According to my Principle, (which I only call mine becauſe I have embraced and defended it) the *Foundation* of *Virtue* ever remains firm and unſhaken, whatever Mens Conduct or Practices may be. The *Reaſons* and *Relations* of Things are eſſential and unalterable. *Moral Rectitude* therefore muſt be perpetually the ſame, if grounded thereon. But if *Natural Inſtincts* be its only Support, and Men have it in their Power to get rid of ſuch Inſtincts; whenever this is done, it may be ſaid in reſpect to thoſe Men, that *Virtue* is not only broken down, but its very *Foundations* overturned.

But tho' the *Reaſons of Things* be unchangeable, yet is not our *Faculty of Reaſon* capable of being changed and corrupted? May not our Underſtandings be vitiated, and our Judgments diſtorted? Doubtleſs they may, in ſome meaſure. But while a Man is *compos mentis*, his Reaſon can never be deſtroyed, or its Perceptions inverted. In ſpite of all his

Arts

Arts and Evaſions, a vicious Man muſt be forced, in many Caſes, to perceive Things to be, not as he would have them, but as they really are. However he may have hardened his *Heart*, or loſt his *Feeling*, he can never quite blind his *Judgment*, or extinguiſh the Light of his *Underſtanding*. Tho' we ſuppoſe him entirely diveſted of Compaſſion, and wrought up to ſuch a Pitch of Fierceneſs and Brutality, as to be greatly delighted with cruel Actions, yet it will not always be in his Power to make ſuch Actions appear *right*, and *reaſonable*, even to himſelf. *Truth* will ſometimes break in upon his Mind, whatever Care he may take to guard againſt it. —— In ſhort, let a Man be never ſo profligate, this *Rational Principle*, tho' it may be much weakened in him, can never be deſtroyed. However its Fruits are blaſted, or its Branches withered, ſtill it lives, and cannot be quite killed. But in all Appearance, a *Virtue*, merely *inſtinctive*, may be plucked up by the very Roots.

ART. XXIII. But I think this Foundation of Virtue very honourable. For theſe Moral Sentiments ſeem to be the univerſal Taſte of Nature, and not only yours or mine. All Signs of the Contrary manifeſtly ariſe from the Diſorder of Nature.

ANS.

Ans. Such a *Foundation of Virtue* ſeems to me *diſhonourable*, becauſe it takes away the *Merit* of virtuous Actions. For how can any Action be *meritorious*, to which the Agent is determined by the Force of a mere *Impulſe*? By ſuch a Weight the Mind is drawn, as it were, mechanically; and as far as that is the Caſe, I can ſee no more Moral *Worth* in the Actions thereby produced, than in the Movements of a Clock, or the Vibrations of a Pendulum. Beſides, *Reaſon* is hereby placed in Subordination to inferior Powers and Principles; and ſuch as Brutes themſelves are poſſeſſed of. Nor is any other Employment allotted it, than that of being miniſterial to *Inſtinct*, and contriving Means for the gratifying of a Natural Inclination. —— The *Univerſality* of a *Moral Affection*, and a *Moral Senſe*, does not remove the Imputation we are ſpeaking of. *Hunger* and *Thirſt* are *univerſal Inſtincts*; but however ſuitable they may be to our preſent Condition, they are never reckoned *honourable* to Human Nature. —— Undoubtedly Men may contract ſuch Diſpoſitions and Habits as are contrary to Nature; and in reſpect of the preſent Conſtitution of Mankind, ſuch Diſpoſitions may be called *Diſorders*. But in ſtrictneſs, if there be real *Order* in Things and Actions, there can be no real *Diſorder*. However, if *Virtue* be founded on *Inſtinct*, and according to the foregoing Suppoſition, this Inſtinct may poſſibly be worn out, and a con-

trary Affection acquired; in this Caſe the Agent has changed his *End*, and thoſe Actions muſt be reputed *reaſonable* which conduce to this new End. He ſtill acts conformably to a prevailing *Sentiment*, and purſues the Bias of his corrupt Nature; and if *Reaſon* and *Moral Rectitude* be thrown out of the Queſtion, who can convict him of doing wrong?

ART. XXIV. The Works of the Creation give us great Reaſon to believe, that the Attributes of God are agreeable to theſe Sentiments. If ſo, theſe Sentiments are eternal and unchangeable.

ANS. I have been obliged to anticipate this Article; and therefore ſhall not need to anſwer it at Large. *The Works of the Creation* do indeed plainly diſcover to us the infinite *Goodneſs* of the Creator. But this *Goodneſs* is, I humbly preſume, grounded on *Reaſon* and *Moral Fitneſs*, and upon that very Account is *eternal and unchangeable*. It could not be ſo upon any other Suppoſition, excepting that of abſolute *Neceſſity*; which, as I before obſerved, is utterly inconſiſtent with Moral Perfection. What Idea can we have of any *Goodneſs*, but that which is *free*? Or of any *Bounty*, but that which is *willed* and *deſigned*?

deſigned? We receive great Advantages from the *Sun* and *Moon*; but can they therefore be properly called our *Benefactors?* Or are they, in any Degree, *meritorious* upon that Account? Suppoſing them *intelligent*, there would be nothing laudable, nothing Praiſeworthy in their Communications of Light; if that Light were only a neceſſary Emanation. And the ſame may be ſaid of the divine Benignity, which overflows the World, and fills the whole Univerſe. If it were not in God's Power to withhold his Gifts, they would not really be Gifts; and however good they might be in a *natural* Senſe, it would be impoſſible to underſtand how the Author of them could be accounted good in a *Moral* Senſe. In ſhort, to ſuppoſe any Moral Actions neceſſary, is to make a contradictory Suppoſition. For if they were *neceſſary*, they could not be *Actions*; much leſs *Moral* ones.

ART. XXV. It is no Objection to ſay, that no Reaſon can be given for the Preference of theſe Sentiments to contrary ones. For the Choice of Ends is no way a matter of Reaſon. But I think this Objection may be very well retorted. For without ſuppoſing ſuch a Sentiment, I can find no Rea-

ſon for ever preferring one Action to another.

Ans. *Ends* are either *Ultimate*, or *Subordinate*. *Ultimate Ends* determine themſelves, as being neceſſarily approved. The ultimate End of the Deity in all his Acts of Creation and Providence, I humbly ſuppoſe to be *Moral Good*. Every Thing is to be referred to this, and reſolved into it. Why did he at firſt produce the Univerſe? Why does he ſtill preſerve and cheriſh it? Why repleniſh it continually with Variety of Good? Becauſe he ſees it to be abſolutely *right* and *fit* ſo to do. Or in other Words, becauſe the pureſt and moſt perfect *Reaſon* directs him to it. Though therefore *Reaſon*, or *Intelligence*, conſidered as an Attribute, do not make this *End*; yet it diſcovers it to be, what it really is in it ſelf, an *abſolute*, *eſſential*, and *neceſſary Good*; and by Conſequence, the true ultimate End not only of the ſupreme Being, but of every Moral Agent. —— We are ſo immerſed in the Enjoyments and Deſires of *Natural Good*, that the Ideas of Pleaſure and Profit are continually obtruding themſelves upon us; even in thoſe Enquiries where they have no Concern. It ſeems evident to me, that making *Pleaſure* of any Kind the *End* of a *Moral Agent*, is as abſurd, as making *Truth* or *Virtue* the *End* of a *ſenſible Agent*. What a *Moral Agent* primarily propoſes, is to act *reaſonably*; let the Conſequence be as

it

it may. If it be asked, why a *Moral Agent* propoſes to act *reaſonably*; then I ask, why a *ſenſible Agent* propoſes to act *pleaſurably*? Our Faculty of *Reaſon* does not conſtitute the one a Good; but perceives it to be ſuch. Our Faculties of *Senſe* do not conſtitute the other a Good; but find and feel it to be ſuch. The one is good, merely becauſe it is grateful; the other is good and amiable in its own Nature, antecedently to all Events or Operations.

As to *ſubordinate Ends*, and *particular Objects* of natural Affection, though theſe likewiſe are not determinable by *our Reaſon*, yet it does by no means follow, that there was originally no Reaſon or Ground for any Preference among them. It was in the Creator's Power, as it became his infinite Wiſdom, to determine and appoint for all his Creatures ſuch *Ends*, *Objects*, and *Affections*, as would be moſt coducive to the Order and Harmony, the Welfare and Perfection of the whole. Theſe *Affections* are no otherwiſe dependent on our *Reaſon*, than as it may repreſent to us, that they ought to be regulated and reſtrained, when they grow exorbitant; and likewiſe ſuggeſt to us proper Means for effecting it. —— If by *the Choice of Ends*, be meant any Thing more than the Approbation of them; then it belongs not to our perceptive Faculties, but the *Will*, which very often rejects what thoſe approve.

Though

Though *without ſuppoſing Sentiment*, no Reaſon can be given for the *Preference* of one of theſe Objects before another, or the Purſuit of any of them; yet in reſpect of *Moral Actions*, I apprehend the Caſe to be widely different. We prefer one Action before another, becauſe we perceive it to be intrinſically better. *Moral Goodneſs* derives not its Worth from any *Sentiments*, or any Faculties; but is neceſſarily approved and admired by all Beings that are capable of underſtanding it. It does indeed promote many natural Ends in the higheſt and moſt effectual Manner; but this is not its only Excellence, nor even its chief Perfection. *Virtue* is it ſelf, and in its own Nature, of all *Objects*, the nobleſt, over all *Ends*, ſupreme.

ART. XXVI. To ſay that Reaſon is the ſupreme Faculty, ought to be no Objection to this Scheme, if we can prove it to be the only reaſonable one. Nor does it enter into the Queſtion, which is the nobler Faculty; but which is the Faculty that can ſerve as a Foundation for Virtue, and which not.

ANS. If *this Scheme be the only reaſonable one*, or more reaſonable than the other; it will and ought to prevail, whatever Objections may lie againſt it. I have endeavoured to

to ſhew, that this is not the Caſe. —— Whether *Reaſon*, or the ſuppoſed *Moral Senſe*, be the *nobler Faculty*, is not indeed directly the Queſtion before us. But the Reſolution of the main Queſtion ſeems, in ſome Meaſure, to depend upon it. For if *Reaſon* be our chief Faculty, and *Virtue* the higheſt Perfection of which we are capable; it follows, with great Probability, that they belong to each other. Such a Concluſion is agreeable to the Order of Nature; as it is ſtrongly enforced by other Conſiderations already inſiſted on. —— Properly ſpeaking, it is not our *Faculty* of Reaſon, but *Reaſon objectively* conſidered, that is the *Foundation* of *Morality*. Thoſe *Reaſons and Relations of Things*, which neceſſarily flow from the Natures and Circumſtances of Agents and Objects. This appears to me not only a ſufficient *Foundation for Virtue*, but the fitteſt and firmeſt that can poſſibly be conceived.

ART. XXVII. I do not know why we ſhould prefer the Faculty of Reaſon to the Faculty of Sentiment. Neither of them depend upon our ſelves, but are the Gift of God, and Nature. And I think, of the two, Reaſon is the more variable.

ANS.

Ans. It ſeems to me, that *Reaſon* is as much ſuperior to *Inſtinct*, as a *Man* is to a *Brute*. The *inſtinctive* Operations of ſome Brutes are very wonderful, and perhaps exceed the fineſt Productions of human Art. Nevertheleſs *Reaſon* gives Men ſo many, and ſuch manifeſt Advantages, that it is needleſs to inſiſt on them. —— It is very true, that our *Reaſon* is the *Gift of God:* So are likewiſe our *external Senſes*. But it does not follow from hence, that they are of equal Value and Dignity with our *Underſtandings*. —— However *variable* or defective our *Faculty* of Reaſon may be, the *Reaſons* and *Relations of Things* can never change. *Moral Rectitude* therefore is perpetually, and invariably the ſame, whatever Miſtakes we may happen to commit about it. Our fallible *Underſtandings* may err in the Purſuit of any Science; but *Truth* is not to be ſhaken, or any way affected by our Miſapprehenſions. —— It is granted, that human *Virtue*, conſidered merely as *Moral*, cannot riſe higher than human *Reaſon:* Since we cannot *act* to greater Perfection than we are able to *think*. All that follows from hence is, that our *Actions* may be ſometimes unavoidably erroneous, as well as our *Judgments*. And whether we have, or have not, the *Sentiments* here ſuppoſed, Experience informs us, that we are often forced to commit both ſpeculative and practical Miſtakes.

ART. XXVIII. You ſay, *Reaſon alone can juſtify the Choice of a Moral Agent; who is no further Praiſe-worthy, than as he acts in Conformity thereto.* You ſay likewiſe, that *inſtinctive Goodneſs is the Creator's Goodneſs.* What is more or leſs Praiſe-worthy in the Exerciſe of one Faculty above another, is very difficult to determine. I ſuppoſe that all our Faculties come equally from God. And whatever I act voluntarily, that is, by an Exertion of the Will; is, I think, as properly my own Action, as any Action can poſſibly be. For the reſt, my reaſon is altogether independent of my Choice; as my Sentiments, or any ſort of Inſtinct can be.

ANS. It ſeems not poſſible to diſcover the true *Foundation* of *Virtue*, or the *Original of our Ideas* concerning it; without enquiring what is, or is not, *Praiſe-worthy* in the *Exerciſe* of our *Faculties*, and in the Exerciſe of *one above another*. For whatever conſtitutes Moral Actions *Praiſe-worthy*, conſtitutes them *virtuous*; and whatever en-

hances their *Merit*, enhances their *Virtue*. Moral *Virtue* is Moral *Worth*, which entirely conſiſts in the *Conformity* of our Actions to *Reaſon*; that is, to the true *Reaſons and Relations of Things*, where they can be diſcovered, and where they cannot, to the *Underſtanding* of the Agent. —— Our *Approbation* of *Virtue* is not an arbitrary Deference, a voluntary Reſpect paid to it, but is the neceſſary Effect of its eſſential *Worth*. As we are compelled to *aſſent* to whatever appears *true*, ſo we are forced to *approve* whatever appears *right*. But this Neceſſity is not external. It flows directly from the intrinſick Excellence, and Self-amiableneſs of the Thing approved. —— But in order to produce a virtuous, or meritorious Action, what we *neceſſarily approve*, that we muſt *freely chuſe*. Without a *Conformity to Reaſon*, no Action can be *right*; without *an Exertion of the Will*, it could not really be an *Action*. And as *Action* and *Paſſiveneſs* are inconſiſtent Ideas, ſo are *Paſſiveneſs* and *Merit*. For no Man can be ſaid to act laudably, who acts not at all. If in any Caſe he be partly active, and partly paſſive, whatever be produced thereby, nothing is to be placed to his Account, but his own Share of the Action. As far as he is *paſſive*, ſo far himſelf can pretend to no Praiſe; whatever may be due to any co-operating Agent.

I will not pretend to determine preciſely what Share of our *inſtinctive* Actions belongs to us, and what does not: But it ſeems to me

me exceeding plain, that our *Rational* Actions are much more *our own*, than our *inſtinctive* ones. For tho' there be an *Exertion of the Will* in the latter, yet ſo great a Weight, ſo ſtrong a Bias is put upon it, that inſtead of being inclined, or induced, it may be ſaid to be almoſt driven. —— When a Man, finding himſelf unexpectedly at the Brink of a Precipice, ſuddenly ſtarts back, this *inſtinctive Action* cannot certainly be thought as much, and as properly *his own*, as the deliberate avoiding of ſuch a Place. Part of it, at leaſt, is to be aſcribed to the Strength of the Impulſe. And I am not certain whether this be ſufficient. It may poſſibly be not the Man's Action at all, but the Effect of ſome other Cauſe. For tho' neither *Ideas*, nor *inſtinctive Principles* can act, as being not *Subſtances*, yet the Almighty Author of them, being an omnipreſent Subſtance, can ever act, where, when, and how he pleaſes. It may therefore deſerve to be conſidered, whether ſome of thoſe inſtinctive Actions which are commonly aſcribed to his *Creatures*, may not more properly be aſcribed to the *Creator*. Whether He produce them, or only co-operate in the Production of them; it ſeems very evident to me, that the Goodneſs of any Actions, conſidered as inſtinctive, is *the Creator's Goodneſs*, and not the *Creature's*.

It is very true, that *all our Faculties come equally from God*. But this does not prove them to be equally valuable. Every thing

produced by Him is good in its Kind. But the Kinds of Things are vaſtly different in Value and Perfection. Our *Souls* and our *Bodies* equally came from Him, but yet the former are much more excellent than the latter. And the ſame Obſervation may be made in reſpect of our *Senſes*, *Inſtincts*, and *Underſtandings*.

Tho' it was not owing to our *Choice*, that we were formed either *reaſonable*, or *ſenſible* Creatures, yet it depends upon our Choice, whether we will act reaſonably or unreaſonably, virtuouſly or viciouſly.—— If it be alledged, that the *Reaſons of Things*, or *Moral Fitneſs* may operate on our Minds as forcibly as *Inſtincts*; and by Conſequence, equally diminiſh our Liberty, and leſſen the Merit of our Moral Actions: I anſwer, That the Caſes are widely different. The *Reaſons of Things* are indeed fit to influence the Will in a *Moral* way; otherwiſe they would not be eligible. But they do not at all impair, or affect our *Natural Liberty*. For as they have no real Efficiency, they cannot poſſibly produce any *Phyſical* Effect, or Alteration in the Mind. But, if I miſtake not, every *Inſtinct* is a *Phyſical* Principle of Action. In ſome Inſtances the Mind may poſſibly be altogether *paſſive*, as I before obſerved. In others perhaps it may partly *act*, and partly be *acted upon*. However, in all inſtinctive Caſes, there muſt be, at leaſt, a real Tendency, Propenſity, or Pre-determination of the Mind. Every *Natural*

tural or implanted *Affection* is ſuch a Pre-determination; which may indeed be reſiſted, or counteracted; but it is manifeſt, that the reſiſting of ſuch a Principle requires a much ſtronger Effort of the Mind, than complying with it.

ART. XXIX. It is true, if we do not act rationally, our Actions are not juſtifiable, or Praiſe-worthy: But it is not the Reaſonableneſs of them that makes them ſo. Error is certainly a Defect; but that Defect is not always criminal. It is not Error, but wilful Error, that we condemn. Therefore it is not Reaſon, but ſome other Faculty that is upon Tryal, when we judge of the Juſtifiableneſs of any Action.

ANS. By the *Reaſonableneſs* of an *Action*, may either be meant its Conformity to the true *Reaſons and Relations of Things*; or to the *Underſtanding* of the Agent. The Compliance of the Will with a *miſ-informed* Underſtanding, juſtifies the Agent, in reſpect of that Action. The Compliance of the Will with a *well-informed* Underſtanding, not only juſtifies the Agent, but is really in it ſelf a *right* Action. An involuntary Error is certainly blameleſs. But tho' it can never be reputed

reputed a *Crime*, it may be, and often is, an *Incapacity*. It may diſable the Agent ſo far, as to obſtruct the Rectitude and Perfection of his Actions. What is it then that acquits and juſtifies an erroneous Agent? The *Reaſonableneſs* of his Actions. For tho' they are not conformable to the true *Reaſons of Things*, yet they are conformable to his own *Reaſon* and Judgment. And indeed by all the Reaſon in the World he is to be acquitted, and even commended, for following the beſt Light that he was able to get. As I know no other *Faculty*, beſides that of *Reaſon*, that can poſſibly *judge* of ſuch a Caſe; ſo I ſee not the leaſt Occaſion for introducing or ſuppoſing any other. Tho' the *real* Relations of Things are the true Rule of a Moral Agent; yet when that Rule is out of his Reach, Reaſon allows and directs him to be governed by *apparent* ones.

ART. XXX. We pity Error, but we condemn Malice. To judge wrong, which is purely a Matter of Reaſon, we only look upon as a Misfortune: but not to hearken to our Jugdments, which is a Matter of Sentiment, we always take to be a Crime. Therefore it is the Intention, and not the Judg-

Judgment, which conſtitutes the Worth of a Moral Action.

ANS. Tho' a *right Judgment* contribute to the Perfection of Actions, yet that alone is not ſufficient to conſtitute them *morally good*. The *Rectitude* of Actions muſt not only be *perceived*, but *intended*. And this, I preſume, may very well be done without *Sentiment*. If *moral Rectitude* be ſelf-amiable, and ſelf-eligible, it muſt be *approved*; and by Conſequence, may be *intended* and purſued without any other View. And why may not a *Rational Approbation* recommend it to our Choice, with, or without a *Natural Propenſity?* It is granted that a virtuous *Intention* is eſſential to *Virtue*. This is perfectly agreeable to the *Rational* Scheme; according to which, the chief *End* or *Aim* of the Agent is *Virtue* it ſelf. But how is it conſiſtent with the *inſtinctive* Scheme; according to which, the Agent only follows the Bias of his Nature, and the Tendencies and Pre-determinations of his own Mind. Even here the *End* or the *Intention* is confeſſedly good; but, as I apprehend, the Praiſe of it belongs to the *Creator*, not to the *Creature*.

ART. XXXI. If I was obliged to determine the Preference between the two Faculties of Reaſon and Sentiment,

I ſhould certainly give it for the latter. For I look upon it that Sentiment alone can juſtify the Choice of a Moral Agent. Sentiment directs the Intention; Reaſon only recommends the Manner of Purſuit. If we do not act reaſonably, our Actions are not juſtifiable in point of Reaſon: but in point of Morality, we are to be judged by Sentiment as well as Reaſon; and the Intention is the principal Conſideration.

Ans. I have already obſerved, that the true *Foundation* of *Virtue* is not our *Faculty* of Reaſon, but the intrinſick *Reaſons and Relations of Things*. As to the Faculties here compared, the Object of the one is *relative* and *factitious* Good; the Object of the other is *real*, *eſſential*, and *abſolute* Good. If *Inſtinct juſtify the Choice* of the former, well may *Reaſon* juſtify the Choice of the latter. That there is ſuch a thing as a *Rational Intention*, and that it is more laudable than an *inſtinctive* one, I have endeavoured to ſhew elſewhere. That *Inſtincts* may be ſubſervient to *Morality*, and uſeful to *Moral Agents*, is not denied: But that they are eſſential to Virtue, I can no way comprehend. Whatever Regard be had to the *Intention*, I only inſiſt, that a *Rational*

tional one is more worthy than an *affectionate* one.

ART. XXXII. Sentiment ſhews us what to purſue; Reaſon how to purſue it. Sentiment makes us what we are; Reaſon only ſhews us what we are. Or, if you pleaſe, Sentiment makes us honeſt, benign, ſubmiſſive to Reaſon, (which Reaſon alone cannot do) Lovers of Honour, and Knowledge, and excites us to great Attempts. Reaſon can only make us more knowing, but without the other can never make us wiſe. In all theſe Conſiderations, I think Sentiment is both antecedent and preferable to Reaſon.

ANS. *Reaſon* both *ſhews us what to purſue*, and *how to purſue it*. It not only *ſhews us what we are*, but, in a great meaſure, *makes us what we are*, and diſtinguiſhes us from inferior Creatures. *Reaſon* recommends to us *Honeſty*, *Benignity*, *Submiſſiveneſs to Reaſon*, and every other Virtue. It applauds us whenever we act conformably thereto, and condemns every Violation of them. It is by this Faculty alone, that we diſcover the Intrinſick Value, and Excellence of *Truth*; and

that we are capable of the Knowledge of it. If it be owing to *Sentiment* that we are *Lovers of Honour*, it is only a *reaſonable* Conduct that can make us *worthy* of it. If *Sentiment* ſpur us on to *great Attempts*, *Reaſon* directs and exhorts to the ſame; and the more *Reaſon* is concerned and conſulted in them, the *greater* and better they are. *Reaſon* not only leads to *Knowledge*, but *Wiſdom*; and upon all Occaſions, the more we hearken to *Reaſon*, the *wiſer* we are. *Sentiment* is indeed *antecedent to Reaſon*; and ſo is Infancy to Manhood. But Priority is one Thing, and Preference another. In ſhort, acting according to *Inſtinct*, may be looked upon as the Infant State of *Virtue*; but acting according to *Reaſon*, its Maturity and Perfection.

ART. XXXIII. I do not ſee that this Doctrine any way derogates from the abſolute Fitneſs, inherent Goodneſs, and Self-worth of Virtue. For whatever is meant by thoſe Expreſſions, muſt be the Object of Sentiment, and not of Reaſon. Reaſon can only judge of relative Worth and Goodneſs, and Fitneſs relatively to ſome End. To ſhew why a Thing is abſolutely fit, is to ſhew that it is not abſolutely fit, but fit for ſome external Reaſon.

ANS.

Ans. If this Doctrine repreſent *Virtue* as a Good merely *relative*, and *factitious*; it does more than *derogate from its abſolute* and eſſential *Goodneſs*. And according to my Apprehenſions, this muſt be the Caſe, if *Virtue* be an *Object of Sentiment, and not of Reaſon.* The only Faculty by which we do or can perceive *the abſolute Fitneſs and inherent Goodneſs of Virtue*, is, I preſume, that which we call *Reaſon* or *Intelligence*. For it is by this Faculty only that we are capable of comparing Ideas, and finding out their Eſſential Agreements and Diſagreements. Properly ſpeaking, no *Senſe* is capable of perceiving any other Agreement, than that of the Object with it ſelf. I am not able to diſtinguiſh theſe Faculties any otherwiſe; and without this Diſtinction the Words *Underſtanding* and *Senſe* ſeem to me to have no determinate Meaning. *Senſible Good* is *made* ſuch, and depends entirely on the Will of the Creator. *Intellectual Good* is *unmade*, as neceſſarily flowing from the Perfections of the Divine Nature. As to the *Relative Fitneſs*, here mentioned, *of Means to ſome End*; that indeed is no Object of *Senſe*. *Reaſon* only can diſcover it, and *judge* of it. But is this the utmoſt Extent of *Reaſon*'s Province? Does it not alſo take in *abſolute Fitneſs*? If there be any *Self-worth* in *Virtue*, I have no Idea of any Faculty, but that of *Reaſon* or *Intelli-*

gence, by which it can poſſibly be perceived. —— Of *abſolute Fitneſs*, no Reaſon can be aſſigned but *Neceſſity*. Becauſe Virtue is founded on *neceſſary Truth*, therefore it is neceſſarily *right* and fit. But this is an *internal* not an *external* Reaſon.

ART. XXXIV. I think it ought not to be objected, that this Scheme may allow ſome Degree of Virtue to Brutes; ſince I ſee no Abſurdity in ſuch a Suppoſition.

ANS. If the true Idea of *Virtue* be that of *acting conformably to Inſtinct*; this Suppoſition, ſhocking as it is, ſeems unavoidable. But if this Suppoſition be improbable and abſurd; from thence it will follow, that ſuch an Idea of Virtue ought to be rejected. Now beſides that this Suppoſition ſeems to derogate very much both from the Dignity of Virtue, and of human Nature; I might produce ſeveral Conſiderations to ſhew the Abſurdity of it. But as this would engage me in a long and unneceſſary Digreſſion, I ſhall content my ſelf with obſerving at preſent, that ſuch an Opinion contradicts the general Apprehenſions of Mankind. However Men have differed in their Ideas concerning *Brutes*, I think they have been unanimous in denying them any *Moral Capacities.*

ties. *Aliquid ſimile virtutis*, as *Cicero* * expreſſes it, is the utmoſt Allowance that I have ever met with. I know no Author more liberal in his Conceſſions to Brutes, than Mr. *Locke*. Yet he never ſuppoſes them to be *Moral Agents*. The Author of the *Characteriſticks* ſpeaks of them as being *Good*; that is, regular, and *well-affectioned* according to their Kinds; but never calls them *virtuous*. Nay, he guards againſt ſuch an Opinion; and expreſly tells † us, that *Virtue or Merit is allowed to Man only*.—— I ſhall only add, that a ſtronger Prejudice cannot well lie againſt any Scheme or Doctrine, than its being chargeable with ſuch a Conſequence, as that of Brutes being capable of Virtue. And indeed if *Virtue* were not ſomething above their Capacities, I queſtion whether any Man would think it worth his Time and Pains to diſpute about it. I mean in a *Moral* Way. For that thoſe Creatures afford very curious and wonderful Entertainment to the *Naturaliſt*, is not to be denied.

ART. XXXV. You argue, that if Virtue conſiſt in kind Affections, then the ſtronger thoſe Affections are, the

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* De Finibus. Lib. V. Cap. xiv.
† Vol. II. Page 28.

greater

greater the Virtue; which I think does not hold. I do not think Virtue conſiſts in Affections, but in acting rationally; which cannot be done, in my Opinion, without going upon the Principle of Sentiment. If any of our Affections are carried to a more than natural Height; ſo as to diſappoint themſelves, or interrupt the Satisfaction of other Affections, which are perhaps as ſtrongly grafted in our Nature, and claim an equal Regard; they can certainly exceed the Bounds of Virtue. Otherwiſe I do not ſee why it may not be owned, that the ſtronger the Affection, the greater the Virtue.

Ans. How *Virtue can conſiſt in acting rationally*, and yet be impracticable *without Sentiment*, ſeems very difficult to comprehend. A Principle of *Reaſon*, and a Principle of *Inſtinct*, appear to me as diſtinct, as any two Principles can be. Though Mankind have both, yet they might have had either without the other. We ſee many *irrational* Creatures abounding in *Affections* and *Inſtincts*. And probably there are many Creatures, of an Order ſuperior to Man, poſſeſſed of much higher Degrees of *Intelligence*, with-

without any * *Inſtincts* at all. And indeed it ſeems to me very manifeſt, that the more perfect any Creature is, the leſs occaſion he has for theſe implanted Propenſities and Predeterminations.

Our *Reaſon* was not given us to aſſiſt and ſupport our *Inſtincts*; but theſe Inſtincts were planted in us as Auxiliaries to our Reaſon; to facilitate our reaſonable Undertakings, and quicken us in the Execution of its Orders. It muſt indeed be confeſſed, that our Inſtincts, while they are kept within the Bounds and the Order of Nature, are of great Service to ſuch frail Creatures as Men. They both point out the Road to Virtue, and urge us into it. It deſerves likewiſe to be conſidered, how our *Moral* Inſtincts counterbalance the groſſer ones of *Senſe*, and our *publick* Affections our *private* ones. They are good Arguments therefore of the *Creator's* Wiſdom and Goodneſs; but in reſpect of *us*, they can be nothing more than Helps and Incentives to Virtue. ——*Inſtinct* and *Reaſon*, though united in our Minds, are ſeparated in thoſe of other Creatures, as I before obſerved. As to *Brutes*, I can make no doubt of their being *unintelligent*; and yet we find *Inſtincts* prevailing among them in great Variety, and full Force. ——What is merely effected by Inſtinct, cannot, I think,

* Affections doubtleſs they have, though not inſtinctive ones. I mean ſuch as are raiſed in them by real worthy Objects.

be

be in any Degree meritorious. For ſuppoſing ſome Concurrence of the *Will*, yet if *Reaſon* be unconcerned, and out of the Caſe, what avails a blind, and almoſt extorted Volition? There can be no more Worth in ſuch an Action, than in the Obedience of a Horſe to the Spur.

We may indeed purſue an *Inſtinct* in Conformity to *Reaſon*. We may infer from our having ſuch an Inſtinct, that it is the Will of the Creator we ſhould obſerve its Motions. And if, upon this Account, we comply with it, we act both *rationally* and *religiouſly*. *Religion* being ultimately founded on the moſt perfect *Reaſon*, can never poſſibly interfere with *Moral Virtue*, but muſt be always coincident with it. Nevertheleſs, their immediate Ground and Rule being different, they muſt be diſtinct Ideas; and ſhould not therefore be confounded, as I before took Notice. ——But to return; however Actions may be mixed, or compounded, as flowing from the united Principles of Reaſon and Inſtinct; I cannot but ſuppoſe, that the Worth of ſuch Actions is in Proportion to, the ſhare of Influence which *Reaſon* has in the Production of them. The Force of the *Natural Impulſe*, whatever it amounted to muſt, I think, be ſubſtracted in the Eſtimate. Let us compare two Actions, in which the Predominance of each Principle may be ſuppoſed very great, in order to conceive

ceive more eaſily and clearly wherein Moral Merit conſiſts.

A fond Mother ſees her only Child fall into a River; and in the Tranſports of her Fear, Grief, and Tenderneſs, leaps in to ſave it. A brave Soldier, without any Offence given, is publickly challenged to a Duel; which in ſpite of many vile Reproaches, Inſults, and Outrages, he conſcientiouſly and reſolutely refuſes. Can any one be at a loſs to determine, which of theſe Actions is more meritorious? The former is very natural, and therefore appears very amiable. Compaſſion too pleads in Behalf of the Parent, as well as her Sex. And the immediate Hazard of Life weighs much in her Favour. But notwithſtanding theſe Conſiderations, the *Virtue* and *Moral Merit* of the two Actions will bear no Compariſon. ——— Or, ſet the Difference of theſe two Principles in a ſtronger Light; let us compare any Inſtance of *Natural Affection*, with the Return of *Regulus* to *Carthage*. An Action ſo Heroically virtuous; that, perhaps upon that very Account, the Truth of it has been called in Queſtion; or at leaſt, diſadvantageous Conſtructions put upon it. What *affectionate* Conduct ever raiſed ſuch a Character, or made ſuch a Figure in Hiſtory, as this ſingle Inſtance of *ſevere Virtue?*

But how does *acting rationally* preſuppoſe, or infer, the Principle of *Sentiment?* Is nothing Good, nothing Eligible, but what Na-

ture has recommended and pointed out? Can we approve no Object without a natural Pre-engagement of our Minds? It is never pretended that our Aſſent to *Truth*, or Acquieſcence in it, is owing to any *Inſtinct*. Why then muſt we have Recourſe to ſuch a Principle for the Approbation of *Moral Rectitude*, which is a Branch of *Truth*? The *Relations* and *Reaſons* of things cannot depend upon *Inſtincts*. Theſe cannot therefore be neceſſary either to make us *judge truly*, or *act rationally*.

All Moraliſts are agreed that we ought to *follow Nature*; but the Queſtion is, how we are to follow it. Doubtleſs we ought primarily and principally to regard our *Reaſon*; becauſe it is our governing Principle, our ſupreme Guide. All the other Principles in our Nature are placed in Subordination and Subjection to this. As an *Army* is to move and act in Obedience to its *General*, and by his Direction; ſo ought all the Powers of our Minds to be ſubject to *Reaſon*. We may indeed be directed by our inferior Principles, if *Reaſon* either approves, or does not gainſay. But to repreſent *Reaſon* as ſubordinate and ſubſervient to *Affection*, ſeems to me to be inverting the Order of our Minds, and turning human Nature upſide down.

When *natural Affections* riſe too high, I preſume they are reducible by *Reaſon*. Reaſon will inform a too affectionate and indulgent Parent, of the ill Conſequences of ſuch an

an Exceſs; and he may thereby be prevailed upon to check, and ſometimes counteract the Violence of his Affection. And if a Man's *Affections*, when immoderate, may be reſtrained by *Reaſon*, why may not the ſame Principle be equally uſeful in a contrary Caſe? I mean, why may not *Reaſon* ſupply the Deficiencies of *Affection*, when it is too weak; as well as curb its Extravagances, when it grows too ſtrong? And if ſo why might it not influence the Man, and direct his Actions, ſuppoſing he had no ſuch Affections at all? For if he can act *rationally* in thoſe Caſes where *Inſtinct* is deficient, or ineffectual; I cannot imagine what ſhould hinder him from acting rationally, ſuppoſing him quite void of ſuch an Inſtinct. If this be admitted, it follows from hence, that Virtue conſiſts not in acting conformably to *Inſtinct*, but *Reaſon*.

ART. XXXVI. I intirely agree with you, that Approbation it ſelf is a ſufficient Ground for the Action of a Rational Agent. For it ſeems to me, that the Purſuit of no End can be reaſonable without it; ſince Reaſon cannot in the Nature of Thing, be it ſelf a Recommendation of any End. And

this Approbation, as you ſay, muſt be founded in Neceſſity.

Ans. When *Reaſon* is ſaid to *recommend* to us *Moral Rectitude*; no more is meant by it, than that we diſcover, or perceive by that *Faculty*, the Excellence of this *Object*. In Reality the Object *recommends* it ſelf. Nor can any thing be wanting, in order to *approve* it, and that *neceſſarily*, beſides a Faculty or Power of perceiving it. And this Faculty muſt be what we call *Reaſon* or *Intelligence*; ſince it is by this that we perceive all Kinds of *Truth*; and *Truth* is its proper and peculiar *Object*. —— *Pleaſure* is neceſſarily approved by *ſenſible* Agents, as ſoon as it is *felt*. *Virtue* is neceſſarily approved by *Moral Agents*, as ſoon as it is *underſtood*. *Reaſon* has nothing to do in the former Caſe, nor *Senſe* in the latter. As *Senſe* is ſuppoſed to be the ſole Judge of *Pleaſure*, ſo *Reaſon* or *Intelligence* is the ſole Judge of *Rectitude*.

Art. XXXVII. Since I have defined a Sentiment to be that Faculty of the Mind by which we approve of any Thing merely for its own Sake, whatever it is that we thus approve, or is thus the Object of our Sentiment, muſt be an End. I am not of their Opinion, who

who look upon natural Good, or Pleaſure, as the only End; and that the neat Amount of Pleaſure, is what only deſerves the Name of Happineſs. For I think there are ſeveral other Objects of our Deſires, that claim an equal Title to that Name.

ANS. As the olny ultimate *End* of a *Moral Agent* is *Rectitude*; ſo the only ultimate *End of a ſenſible Agent* is *Pleaſure*. In Reference to the former, every particular *good Action* is approved and performed. In Reference to the latter, every particular *Object of natural Good* is approved and purſued. ——No particular *Object* of *Senſe* is approved or purſued with any other View, or upon any other Account, than that of *Pleaſure*, or *Gratification*; immediately, or ultimately. The Mind is indeed predetermined and preattached to ſuch Objects, by what I call an *inſtinctive* Principle. But whenever it propoſes an *End*, that *End* is *Pleaſure*; or the *Removal of Pain*, between which it is needleſs to diſtinguiſh. An *Infant* is determined to the *Breaſt*; and ſearches for it, before it is capable of knowing why. But as ſoon as it has taſted *Pleaſure*, and is capable of propoſing it as an *End*; it applies to the Object with that View. An *Object* therefore may be purſued either *inſtinctively*, and *blindly*;

or *conſciouſly*, and with an *Intention*. And this *Intention* or *End* is not ſtrictly ſpeaking the *Object*, but the *Pleaſure* reſulting from it.

An *End* is properly that, for the ſake of which any *Object* is purſued. If the true *immediate End* of Eating be *Health*, yet the *ultimate End* is *Pleaſure*, or Self-enjoyment. Thus *Food*, the *Object*, is no End at all; *Health* is the *ſubordinate End*, and *Pleaſure* the *ultimate*. Whether any *ſubordinate End* intervene or not; I know of no *Object* that is purſued by *ſenſible* Agents *for its own Sake*. *Pleaſure* is always intended, either *immediately*, or *ultimately*; except in thoſe Caſes where the Agent acts *irrationally*, and at Random. And in thoſe Caſes there can be no *End* at all.

I have already obſerved, that however our Minds may be *inſtinctively* determined, or prediſpoſed to certain *Objects*; yet if we found no *Pleaſure*, nor Tendency to Pleaſure, in the Purſuit of them; as *ſenſible* Agents, we ſhould certainly reſiſt ſuch *Inſtincts*, and endeavour to diſengage our ſelves from them as ſoon as poſſible. If a Man found no Pleaſure in *Harmony*, he would neither give himſelf the Trouble to practiſe, nor hear a *Leſſon of Muſick*. The only Reaſon why he does either, is the *Pleaſure* he finds in it; which by Conſequence is his ſole *End*.

Happi-

Happineſs, I think, can only ſignify the Sum total of any Man's *Pleaſures*; *Pains* being deducted. If *Pleaſure* only denoted the Gratifications of our *external Senſes*; then indeed it would only ſignify a Part, the loweſt and meaneſt Part of human Happineſs. But ſince it includes, as I ſuppoſe, the pureſt and moſt perfect Senſations, and comprehends every Gratification of the Mind; I know not how to diſtinguiſh *Pleaſure* in general from *Happineſs*. According to my Ideas, every Man is *happy*, in Proportion to the Quantity and Quality of his *Pleaſures*. I mean *clear Pleaſures*, or thoſe which are above the Balance of his *Pains*. And this, I ſuppoſe, is what is here meant by *the neat Amount of Pleaſure*. —— The *Happineſs* of ſuch a Creature as Man, may conſiſt of a great Variety of particular *Pleaſures*; but ſuppoſing the Abſence of Pain, how it can have any other Ingredients, I am not able to conceive. No *Objects* can contribute to our *Happineſs*, otherwiſe than by affording us *Pleaſure*, in Poſſeſſion or Proſpect.

ART. XXXVIII. By what I can collect from Experience, and the Obſervation of Human Nature, every thing that we purſue or deſire, ſeems reducible to the ſix following Objects; which, as they are intirely diſtinct one from another,

ther, and each of them frequently purſued merely for their own ſakes, without any further View, may juſtly be looked upon as the immediate Ends of our internal Sentiments. Theſe are 1. Pleaſure. 2. Applauſe. 3. The Good of others. 4. Reaſon. 5. Knowledge. 6. Power.

ANS. The *immediate Ends* or Objects of our *internal Sentiments* ſeem to exceed the Number here given. However, *Truth*, *Virtue*, and *Pleaſure* are, I think, *Ultimate Ends*, and the only ultimate Ends that we are capable of purſuing. As *intelligent* Agents, we propoſe *Truth*, and *Virtue*: As *ſenſible* likewiſe, *Pleaſure*. I cannot avoid conſidering all the Objects of our *internal Senſes*, and *natural Affections*, as eligible only in Reference and Subordination to theſe.—— *Applauſe* and *Power* are purſued either with *moral* or *pleaſurable* Views. That is, either as they afford Opportunities of performing *virtuous* Actions, or as they *gratify* the Mind of the Purſuer. Neither of them being ſelf-good, they cannot be *purſued merely for their own ſakes*, but muſt be prized and purſued *for the ſake* of ſomething beyond them. All their Worth conſiſts in the forementioned Tendencies; without which we ſhould have no Regard at all to them.—— The *Objects* of all our *Senſes*, whether

whether *internal* or *external*, may be looked upon as good and desirable in the same Respects that these are. *Food*, *Light*, *Colours*, *Odours*, are desireable Objects of the *external* Senses; and *Beauty* and *Harmony* of the *internal* ones. But all their Value consists in their being subservient and subordinate to the ultimate End abovementioned. —— *The Good of others*, or the Publick Good is but a *subordinate End*, tho' a very noble one. It may be pursued for the sake of *Pleasure*, and ought to be pursued for the sake of *Virtue*. But if it neither *gratified* the Mind of the Agent, nor appeared conformable to *Reason* and *Religion*, no Man living would stir a Finger in Behalf of his Fellow-creatures. If these Considerations were set aside, he would not *chuse* to act for the Good of others, however *Instincts* might prompt him, or *Affections* excite him. But in Truth, such *Affections* would either have no Force, or would soon lose it, if the Exercise of them was not accompanied with Pleasure to the Agent.

ART. XXXIX. If this be so, to want any of these, or to want them in their due Strength, is to be looked upon as a Defect. To be so far possessed with any of them, as to disable the Mind from taking proper Measures

to obtain them; or to engroſs it ſo, as that the reſt may not have a due Share of our Attention, is certainly a Vice, or Corruption of Nature.

ANS. To want any Good, or any Degree of any Good that we are capable of, muſt certainly be a *Defect*. But in our preſent Conditions and Circumſtances, it is, more or leſs, unavoidable. To purſue *Moral Good* in ſuch a manner as to overlook *Natural Good*, is confeſſedly wrong. But it is more wrong to purſue *Natural Good* excluſively of *Moral Good*. The Value of every particular *Object*, and every *ſubordinate End*, is to be eſtimated by their greater or leſſer Tendencies to promote the *ultimate Ends* above-mentioned. And as *Virtue* is in its own Nature ſuperior to *Pleaſure*, our Purſuits of the latter ought always to be conſiſtent with the former, and regulated by it. Eſpecially ſince every Inconvenience hereby occaſioned, will be abundantly compenſated by the great Governor of the World; as was obſerved in my former Papers. —— A *Rational* Purſuit of *the Good of Others* is the very Practice of *Virtue*. And as far as *Fame* and *Power* contribute to this End, ſo far the Purſuit of them is even laudable. But in reſpect of Pleaſure, and Self-gratification, if we are very anxious and ſolicitous about thoſe Objects, our Loſſes will exceed our Gains, and inſtead

inſtead of promoting, we ſhall obſtruct the End in view.

ART. XL. Thus we may perhaps have found a juſt Mean between the *Stoick*, and the *Epicurean* Philoſophers; making neither Virtue alone, which would be a ſelf-evident Contradiction to Nature; nor Pleaſure alone, which would highly reflect upon the Dignity of it, the Seat of Happineſs, and End of our Deſires. But placing the greateſt Good in the juſt and proportionable Satisfaction of every one of theſe Sentiments, which ſeem in ſome Degree or other, inherent to the Nature of every thinking Being.

ANS. It ſeems to me, that neither the *Stoicks* nor *Epicureans* conſidered Men as Men, but, as it were, divided Human Nature between them. The *Epicureans*, forgetting themſelves to be *Moral Agents*, and overlooking *Moral Good*, regarded only *Senſibility*. Or if they admitted *Virtue*, it was with no other View than that of miniſtring to *Pleaſure*. On the other hand, the *Stoicks* forgetting themſelves to be *Senſible* Beings, and overlooking *Natural Good*, regarded only

Morality. Or if they admitted *Pleaſure*, it was only that which is produced by *Virtue*. They plainly ſaw that *Virtue* is good *in itſelf*, *abſolutely* and *eſſentially* good, and thence concluded, that it muſt be the true *End* of *Moral Agents*. So far their Concluſion was juſt. But it does by no means follow from hence, that it is *Man*'s only End; who as he is a *Senſible* Agent, muſt have other *Ends* and other *Objects* to purſue. And as the rejecting of *Moral Good* is highly *unreaſonable*, and therefore *unnatural*, ſo the rejecting of *Senſible Good* is very *unnatural*, and therefore *unreaſonable*.

Whatever *Happineſs* or *Satisfaction*, *Virtue* may produce, this is not that inherent Worth, that Self-excellence, which conſtitutes it the *End* of *Moral Agents*, who are primarily to regard and purſue it, not as *ſatisfactory*, not as *beatifick*; but as *right*, and *fit*, and *worthy* in it ſelf, independently of all Conſequences and Effects. Tho' *Virtue* cannot make Men *happy* in the midſt of Misfortunes, Miſeries, and Torments, it can make them *virtuous*. And tho' *ſuffering Virtue* be an Irregularity, yet that Irregularity, which is permitted at preſent for wiſe Ends, will in due Time be fully rectified. As *Moral Agents*, *Virtue* is our *End* and our *Rule*. And it is always worthy to be ſo, whatever Circumſtances we may happen to fall into. If at any time it prove repugnant to our *Happineſs*, nothing follows

follows from hence, but the Certainty of a Future State.

I do not ſee how it *reflects on the Dignity of our Nature*, to make *Happineſs* conſiſt in *Pleaſure*. For I ſuppoſe *Pleaſure* to ſignify every *Gratification* of the Mind; and how any Thing can add to our *Happineſs*, without ſome way or other *gratifying* our Minds, ſeems very hard to be conceived. If ſuch a thing be poſſible, I muſt acknowledge my ſelf not to have the leaſt Idea of it. ——— Whatever Increaſe of *Satisfaction* may be ſuppoſed to reſult from any Combination of Objects, or *Proportion* of Enjoyments, it may be conſidered as a diſtinct Article; but ſtill it is contained in the *Sum* of our *Pleaſures*. And ſo, I preſume, muſt every Thing be, that either increaſes our *Satisfaction*, or adds to our *Happineſs*.

I have now, SIR, gone through your Remarks; and if your Patience has laſted thus far, I beg leave to renew my Apology for the diſproportioned Length of ſome of my Anſwers. I have been tempted to conſider, not only what was fit to be *anſwered*, but alſo what was proper to be *ſaid*; either in relation to my former Papers, or the Subjects before me. And indeed ſeveral of the Points here touched upon, ſeem to me to deſerve a fuller and more exact diſcuſſion than I am able to give them. The Importance of them

them is not to be queſtioned, whatever be the Occaſion of their having yet been ſo ſeldom treated of, and ſo ſlightly paſſed over. And indeed, whether we conſider their Dignity, or Uſe, if the Nature of *Moral Virtue*, and that of our own *Minds*, be not Subjects worthy of our Enquiry and Attention, I know not where we ſhall find any that are ſo. Let others determine whence it comes to paſs, that *Morality* has been leſs ſtudied, and leſs cultivated than other Sciences. I ſhall only obſerve, that if it had been examined with equal Application, I doubt not but the Succeſs would have been anſwerable. Whether there be, or be not ſufficient Grounds for ſuch a Complaint, this muſt, I think, be admitted as a juſt Excuſe for any Attempts in that way, however imperfect. But a tedious Apology for a tedious Performance would be inſufferable. I ſhall therefore add nothing further, excepting that

I am,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient Servant, &c.

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